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THE SECOND SERMON,

Preached to the Honourable

Houſe of

COMMONS,

April 30. 1645.

DISCOVERING

The *Vanity* and *Miſchief* of the *Thoughts* of an *Heart unwaſhed.*

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JER. 4. 14.—*How long ſhall thy vaine Thoughts lodge within thee!*

THeſe words make the ſecond Branch of this Verſe. They containe a ſharp biting *Exprobration* of *Jeruſalem*, for harbouring ſo long within their unwaſhen *Hearts*, a multitude of *Vaine*, deſtructive *Thoughts* which did hinder that effectuall *Repentance* to which he *Exhorteth* them in the former part of this ..t, and way-laid that *ſalvation* which he propoundeth to ..m as the fruit of that Duty.

Some variety there is (yet no jarring) among Interpre..s in tranſlating ſome of the originall words. That which Tranſlators render *vaine thoughts*, ſome tranſlate *Thoughts ..anity*; ſome, *thoughts of grief, trouble*, or *affliction*; ſome,

Thoughts,

thoughts of iniquity. Theſe, and more acceptations of
אָוֶן brew word *Aven*, I find in the Old Teſtament. And no
vail: for *thoughts of vanity* are thoughts of *iniquity*;
fore thoughts of *grief, trouble*, and *vexation*, in regard
certain iſſue and conſequence of them all. Howbeit, be
the *vanity* of them is that which is moſt eminent, yet lea
ſerved, and acknowledged, the moſt judicious and exa
poſitors tranſlate it *vaine thoughts*, or (which is more ful
moſt expreſſive of the Originall) *thoughts of vanity*: th
ſo *vaine*, as they are indeed *vanity it ſelf*; and ſo they ca
their forehead, brand ſufficient to make all wiſe men more
full to caſheir and expell them.

In generall, the *thoughts* here complained of were
vanities as thoſe people fed upon, when they heard of
tivity threatned, or determined, and were invited to a tho
Repentance and Reformation, if not to prevent when
too late, yet to alleviate and improve the Judgement, tha
might be *ſaved* in it, and out of it, and ſo become gain
it. They, inſtead of receiving inſtruction, and taking
ing, pleaſed themſelves with building Caſtles in the aire
times perſwading their hearts, the Judgement would not
or, not yet; or if it did, it would not laſt long; or if it ſh
they had already reſolved to take ſanctuary in *Egypt*: a
ſomewhat muſt be done in a way of repentance, they w
outwardly humble themſelves in prayer and *faſting* befor
* *Zech.* 7. 5. Lord, *yearly, monethly* *, or ſo often as he pleaſed. In
8. 19 meane time, their *hearts* were neglected, no care was t
for the *cleanſing* of them; witneſſe theſe, and many m
thoughts of vanity that ſtill *lodged in them*, and were willi
harboured and entertained by their inner man, which hin
all the good they expected, and bound them faſter to, and
them longer under all that evill which they were moſt
willing to hear of, and moſt deſirous to avoid.

תְּלִין *from* לוּל לִיל 2. The next word to be opened is *talin* (from *lul*)
tranſlated *lodge*, becauſe of the affinity it hath with *lail*, w
Jer. 14. 8. ſignifies *night*, and ſo is often rendred *lodging*, in allu
Iſay. 10. 28. *Way-faring* men, or others that ſtay or *lodge all night* in a
inte

ding hereby the commorance and permanency of these *thoughts* in vaine men, not for a small time, but for con-nce. It is true, the originall word is of the singular num-to note perhaps the concentring of all manner of *vaine ghts* in one, (as many *devils* in the possessed man made up *Legion*;) howbeit, as the Learned note in the expositio we must apprehend a trope in this expression, *pernoctabit Tremelius* renders it,) being put for *pernoctabunt*, (as *Pag-*, well) that is, shall *remaine* and *continue* there, without endeavour to dispossesse or remove them.

3. The last word to be unfolded is *bekirbech*, which is בְּקִרְבֵּךְ translated *within thee*. The Originall is very emphaticall, it imports an entertaining of these thoughts in the very or inmost closet of the soul: whence, some read it, *in ri tui*, in the *inmost part* of thee; others, *in medio tui*, in *ff* of thee, even in that part in which God himself, *Zeph.*3.17. the soul is prepared, delights more especially to reside well. But I shall hold you no longer in the exposition of rds, which are not very obscure. What is here want-ll be supplied in prosecuting the *Observations*, which e three.

1. *God doth as strictly observe and severely censure all inward sinfull Thoughts, although never so secret, as he doth out-ward acts of sin.*

2. *When God resolves to scourge a Nation for their sins, it is usually very long ere they take the right course for their own deliverance.*

3. *God keeps exact reckoning of the time, and accounts it very long, and takes all delaies ill wherein men, under judge-ments, are projecting wayes of their own for their deliver-ance, and so withstand those of his appointment.*

The first of these is obvious to every eye in the surface of Words; the two other arise naturally from the Scope of Holy Ghost in the words of the Text.

1. Obſerv. 1. *God doth as ſtrictly obſerve, and ſeverely cenſure ward ſinfull Thoughts, although never ſo ſecret, as outward acts of ſin.*

HE that runs may read this in the Letter of the Text. need therefore, to ſweat in the proving of the P Rather my labour ſhall be to ſhew unto you. 1. What *Thoughts* be, for kind (not number, for they are innume which the Lord thus *obſerveth* and *cenſureth*. 2. The g *Why* he is ſo *ſtrict* and *ſevere* therein.

For the better underſtanding of the former, we muſt that, in holy Writ, *Thoughts* are taken ſometimes more l ſometimes more *ſtrictly*.

1. What Thoughts are.

1. More *Largely*, for all the inward motions, actin workings of the ſoul, oppoſed to what ever is acted outward man, whether they be inquiries, ſuggeſtions, ſonings about the truth or falſhood, goodneſſe or badn neſit or diſcommodity of the object about which the m buſied; or whether they be deſires after it, or averſeneſſ it, intentions or reſolutions to proſecute, or ſhunne it, ing as the difficulties or neceſſities of attaining, or avoi it, do preſſe upon us. So that, ſometimes the Cauſes, times the Effects of our thoughts do put on and bear th of *Thoughts*. Thus that known place, *Iſay.* 66. 18. (I *their works and their thoughts*) is commonly interpreted b that treat of this ſubject. So likewiſe *wiſdome* and *skil* invention of curious works, is called *thinking of the Exod.* 35. 35. as the Originall hath it. *Care* alſo is *thought*, take no *thought*, *Matth.* 6. 25. *Councels* for the br ing to paſſe our thoughts, are called *Thoughts*, *Pſal.* 5. 10. forging, framing, contriving of any thing in our mind w our thoughts naturally run upon, is called *thoughts*, and *gination of the thoughts*, and looked upon and cenſured by Lord, as *evill*, *Geneſ.* 6. 5. In this latitude, and with cenſure the *thoughts* of wicked men are mentioned, 55. 6. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrigh man his thoughts*, comprehending under *thoughts*

is contra-distinct to *outward acts* and *works*. 1. *Observ.*

More *strictly* and properly, *Thoughts* are those in-
ctings and movings of the Intellect, being formed and
in the *mind* or *spirit* of man, distinguished from the
Will; albeit, in common use of speech, the *heart* be-
seat of the affections and fountaine of all action, which
mind on work to frame and contrive *thoughts*, is the
d parent of all our thoughts, which are therefore called
ly, *thoughts of the heart*. The *mind*, intellect, *spirit*, which
supreme and most sublime faculty in mans soul, is the
seat, and shop, wherein the soul frames all her *thoughts*
ly so termed. Thus, all those movings of the mind,
we call intuitions, inventions, inquiries, speculations,
tions, reasonings, enterviewes, contemplations, pore-
onderings of the intellectuall faculty, which it frames
it self by it own intuitive power to look into intelli-
objects, whether by intelligible species of the things
ves without the help of phantasy, or as assisted by the
y and senses, presenting the object to the intellect in
sible representation. So is *thought* taken, and (being
ondemned, *Deut.* 15. 9. *Beware that there be not a*
(or *word*; for, a thought is the inward talk or dis-
) *in thy wicked heart*: that is, such a thought as breeds
t void of pity and compassion towards a brother in di-
; and is there opposed not onely to outward acts of *giv-*
nothing, but to an *evill eye*, that is, to want of pity
h is properly an act of the *heart*, attributed to the *eye* by a
nymy, because the eye turns away where the heart turns
towards the object. And so we find *thoughts* restrained,
139. 2. *Thou understandst my thoughts afar off*: That is,
ings and workings of the Intellect and Spirit in man,
ich afford matter for the heart (that first set the mind on
k) to work upon.

The learned sometimes distinguish

1. Between *Cogitation*, and *Imagination*; this being the
phantasy which by help of the senses, frameth multitudes
or sensible Images of things in her own shop, and

1. *Obſerv. Cogitatio quaſi animi cogitatio, i. e. mentis agitatio.*

then preſenting them to the *Intellect*: the other being an or agitation of the *mind*, not forming any ſenſible there, but pondering, and looking into even ſenſible (as as other) things, in an intellectuall way. Thus the A ſeems to put a difference between the *Imagination*, *Thoughts*; that, *exalting it ſelf againſt the knowledge* ; *againſt the obedience of Chriſt*, 2. *Cor.* 10. 5. Howbeit, are often put promiſcuouſly one for another; eſpecially, *ginations* paſſe for *Thoughts*, becauſe the phantaſy, the im diate framer of the imaginations, doth preſent the mind ſuch continued multitudes of them, that mans Intellect ly acts any thing without them: therefore are the tho called the *imagination of mans heart*, *Gen.* 8. 21.

Aquin. 2. 2. *q.* 180. *ar.* 3. Rich. de S. Vict. *de Contempl. l.* 1. *cap.* 4. Gerſon *par.* 3. *aliique.*

2. Between *Cogitation*, *Meditation*, and *Contempl* The firſt, they make to be a more ſudden, ſhort aſpect confuſed glance of the mind upon ſome object, witho fixed inquiry into it, or long debate about it. *Meditat* more ſerious and ſetled act of the mind upon an object, all intention and vehemency of ſpirit labouring to find nature and excellency of it, and to dwell and feed upon thoughts, as pleaſed with and delighted in them. *Contem* is a more ſublime, free, intimate, and perſpicacious int of an object, without ſuch toile as is incident to both th mer; yet procuring more delectation to the Contempl than either of the other, by how much it is able to pe deeper into the nature of the object, acts by a more no culty in the beholding of it, and can more exactly and rately delineate it to the life, by a mere act of the under ing, as if it were actually preſent to the eye, or really act the body, (ſuppoſing it to be ſome ſenſitive or ſenſuall th or fully comprehended by the mind, if merely intellect and remote from ſenſe.

This laſt the Schoole-men uſuall apply to the beholding things Divine, by ſuch as pretend to give themſelves to cluſe Profeſſion of *Monkiſh* Religion, for *Contemplati* ἔσχλω, ſequeſtring themſelves from that ſecular courſe o which they call *Active*. But when once it becomes de

the contemplating of wickedneſſe, excogitated, repre- 1. Obſerv.
, and intellectually acted in and by the mind, it is of all
the vileſt, deepeſt, moſt lothſome and moſt malicious
dneſſe; becauſe, hereby the nobleſt and higheſt faculty is
loyed and proſtituted (contrary to nature) to the baſeſt
more than bruitiſh drudgery and ſlavery, far beyond any
hich the meaneſt and moſt carnall, ſenſuall bruitiſh part
vileſt man can (all things conſidered) poſſibly be ex-
. Hence devils are ſaid to outgo men in ſinning, becauſe
ir ſins are of larger compaſſe, higher reach, and deeper
ions, in regard that their ſins be merely ſpirituall and
tellectuall and contemplative, than mans can be: And
we uſually terme thoſe men who are given up to con-
tive wickedneſſe, *devils incarnate*, becauſe thereby they
ceeſt unto devils, and exceed all other men who trade
e baſe and ſenſuall luſts, and cannot reach to ſuch an
in ſinning as the former do.

ordinarily, the ſacred Scripture is not ſo curious thus
guiſh between theſe three, *Cogitation*, *Meditation*, and
lation; but, many times under one of them, compre-
reſt; as, under the name of *knowledge* are not ſeldom
d the ſubſequent acts of all the affections that attend
it.

3. Divines diſtinguiſh *inter cogitationem malam & cogi-
mali*: between an evill thought, and a thought of
. By the firſt, they underſtand ſuch thoughts as are whol-
med in, and ariſe out of a corrupt heart or mind, as fogs
vapours out of the earth, or ſcume out of a pot. By the
, they mean ſuch as have their firſt riſe, breath, and inje-
from *without*. Theſe be either thoſe thoughts inſpired by
Holy Ghoſt, moving us ſo to think and conſider of evill
bidden, as alwayes to fear the defilements of it, to ſhun and
horre it: and theſe *thoughts of evill*, are not evill, but good,
none can be good without them; or elſe, they are thoughts
ſted and injected by Satan, to draw us unto evill; and are
imes called his *motions*, 1. *Sam.* 24. 1. *the meſſengers of*
, 2. *Cor.* 12. 7. *the fiery darts of the devill*, *Epheſ.* 6. 16.

Theſe

1. *Observ.* These again, are either such as are not assented to, but abhorred by us, as those suggested to our Saviour, *Mat* they are such to which assent and consent is given by us. former are no more our sins, than the rape of a chast or Matrone that cryed out and did all she could to stand the wickednesse and violence offered to her, is to counted her sin. But the latter are no lesse our sins, th child is the mothers that conceived it, as well as the that begat it. Satan first *filled the heart* of *Ananias* to *ly* *Holy Ghost*, *Act.* 5. 3. that is, he begat that prodigious ster upon the heart of *Ananias*; but, by consent unto it, *nias* is charged with it, as the mother of it, having *c* *this in his heart*, *ver.* 4. Thus *David*, by yeelding unt who *provoked him to number the people*, 1. *Chro.* 21. 8. fesseth the sin to be his own, *ver.* 8. *I have sinned gre* *cause I have done this thing.* Satan begat it, but *David* and brought it forth, as the prodigious conception of h cumbing heart.

Now, all these, which are not from God, but an our own, whether Imaginations, Cogitations, Medi or Contemplations of evill, together with all injection tan, consented unto by us, be they never so subtile, spi (I mean simply and purely intellectuall, if naturall) a stracted from all commerce and intelligence with, and by the exterior senses, or members of the body; and ly never so close and secret in the highest, or inmost closet soul, that no eye, but Omniscience it self can possibly dis and disclose them, do fall under as *strict Observation, and* *censure of the Lord, as any outward acts of sin* whatso Thus you see what are the *Thoughts* here complained of, censured.

2. *The Grounds why it is so.* 2. The *Grounds* of the point come next to be consid And they are such as I shall now dig out of the Quarry Text it self.

1. *The* Thoughts *are* vain, *and that in a threefold regard.* 1. They be *vaine*, yea, *thoughts of vanity*. And th fully understood, is enough to condemn them; for th *vaine* in so many respects as render them justly odious

rig

…ous God. I ſhall reduce their *vanity* to three heads. *1. Obſerv.*

1. They are *vaine* in regard of their frothy worthleſſenes, 1. Of their *unprofitableneſſe.*
…g no ſolidity or value in them. They are like the ſcumes …Sea, the froth of a furnace, that hath neither ſubſtance, …profit in it. Thus, that is called *vaine, which cannot profit,* …o any good, 1. *Sam.* 22. 21. ſuch are the naturall thoughts …ablest men. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wiſe, …they are vaine,* 1. *Cor.* 3. 20. ſo *vaine*, that they make *the …little worth*, (*Prov.* 10. 20.) and the man himſelf that …taines them, to be *lighter than vanity*, *Pſal.* 62. 9. ſo …and empty, that the very ſhadow of the wind will turn …llance in which he is weighed, and cauſe him to be *found …ing*. *Dan.* 6. 27.

2. They are *vaine*, in reſpect of the folly, yea madneſſe of 2. Of their …So *vanity* is taken, 2. *Sam.* 6. 20. where *David* is *folly* and *mad-neſſe.* …d by his malignant wife *Michal*, when he daunced be-…the Ark, that he *ſhamefully uncovered himſelf as one of the …fooliſh* (that is, the fools) *of Iſrael.* The multitude, …neſſe, variety, confuſedneſſe of the thoughts of proud, …us, or diſcontented men, fire their ſpirits, dry up the …all moiſture of the braine, baniſh ſleep, diſturb the phan-…and diſtract the intellect, crack and wound the principles …ſon, and ſo make men phreneticall and naturally mad, …uiting them of the right uſe of their Reaſon, and cauſing …to miſtake, invert, and pervert every thing in their ap-…henſions, diſcourſes, and actions. Thus, do *vaine thoughts* …diſtract, infatuate, and make men no leſſe wild and …in ſpirituall reſpects alſo, that when *vaine men would be …wiſe, they become vaine in their imaginations*, profeſſing *them-…ſelves wiſe, they become fools*, *Rom.* 1. 21, 22. and ſuch fools …are likewiſe over-run with deſperate ſpirituall madneſſe: …they that in matters of the world can manage buſineſſe like …all and well accompliſht men, in the matters of God, in …buſineſſe of their ſouls, cannot ſee their way, nor act like …ſonable creatures; but rather, *like naturall brutit beaſts made* 2. *Pet.* 2. 12. …taken to be deſtroyed, do *corrupt themſelves, even in the things* *Jude* 10. …*they know naturally*, as the Apoſtle *Jude* ſpeaketh. This

1. *Obſerv.* moved the wiſe man, in his ſearch after *the wickedneſſe of* to couple *fooliſhneſſe* and *madneſſe* together. *Eccleſ.* 7. and to render this account of his inquiries, that in ſonnes of men who are evill, *madneſſe is in their* [illegible] *while they live*, *Eccleſ.* 9. 3. that is, in regard of *vanity* of their *thoughts* touching heavenly things.

3. Of their *wickedneſſe.* 3. They are *vaine* in regard of the *wickedneſſe* of th So the Scriptures ſometimes decipher out a wicked perſo calling him a *vaine* man. Such were thoſe *vaine men* gath unto *Jeroboam*, that is, *ſons of Belial*, as it is interpr 2. *Chro.* 13. 7. Thus *David* refuſing to ſit with *vain pe Pſal.* 26. 4. expounds himſelf to mean thereby, *the wi ver.* 5. Therefore the ſame Hebrew word which in this is tranſlated *vaine*, is often put for *ſin* and *wickedneſſe*. So

אָוֶן 11. 14. *If iniquity be in thy hand, put it far away, and let* מַעֲשֵׂי אָוֶן *wickedneſſe dwell in thy Tabernacles.* And in *Iſay* 59. 6. *Works are works of iniquity*: becauſe all iniquity is *menda* meer lye, a vanity; it promiſeth that content, ſatisfaction, pineſſe unto a man that it can never performe, but merely ludes, rides, and robs him, leading him as a fool to the ſt and as an oxe to the ſhambles, ere he diſcover or ſuſpe *deceitfulneſſe of ſin.* Hence that irrefragable Concluſion o wiſeſt man, *Prov.* 24. 9. *the thought of fooliſhneſſe is ſin.* is, not onely ſuch thoughts as get the conſent of the will, that tickle the heart with ſome kinde of delight, albeit c ſent be not yet obtained; but even the ſhorteſt, unpremeditated, unexpected, ſudden motions of the mind unto any p cular folly, ariſing in and from the heart, and the prone unto evill, although they never *lodge* there at all, but are ſtantly ſuppreſſed and expelled, ſo ſoon as diſcovered; T I ſay, are ſuch *Thoughts* as are properly *ſins.*

It is true, the *Thoughts* I have now to deal againſt, are as *lodge* in us. But yet theſe are not the onely *vaine*, or *thoughts* in man. I may therefore hence raiſe an Argu *minori*, to confirme the point in hand. For, if *Thoughts* conſented to, not allowed of, nor permitted to harbor or in the heart ſo much as for a moment, after they be deſ

1. *Observ.*

...rnely sins: then, much more those *Thoughts* which have ...ned consent, or at least are pleasing to the heart, and are suf-...d to *lodge* there so long as they will, are properly and for-...ally *sins*.

But such are the former, as is evident, thus. The least ab-...ration or swerving from the Rule of the Law, is a transgres-...on of it, and so a *sin*: for, *sin is the transgression of the Law*, ...*oh.* 3. 4. Such is any *evill* thought, never so short, because ...deviates from the Law that requires us *to love the Lord with ...the heart, with all the soul, with all the strength, and with all ...mind*, *Luk.* 10. 27. which Law is violated, where any ...ought tending to evill, at any time ariseth in the *heart* or ...: for, at that time *all* the *heart* and *mind* is not for God. ...sides, I know no solid Divine but admits *Originall Corrup-...on* to be *sin* in all the motions of it: therefore such are all *Thoughts* proceeding from it, כְּאִמָּהּ כֵּן בִּתָּהּ *as is the mother, so ...her daughter*, saith the Hebrew Proverb. *Herodias* and *Salome* ...are both of a kinde; If the tree be evill, so is the fruit. The ...mme light of depraved Nature holds forth as much. Hence ...*ero* could see and say, *cum qui vel cogitaret malum, non latere ...Deum*. He that but thinks an evill thought, is not hid from God. Now, *cogitare est minus quam cupere*, saith Saint *Au-...stin*, to *think* is lesse than to *desire*. Notorious also is that of the ...Poet,

Namque sceleris in se tacitum qui cogitat ullum,
Facti crimen habet.

He that within himself but thinks amisse,
Of sinfull fact committed that man guilty is.

The Spartan *Glaucus* (although famous for Justice in other ...particulars) paid dear for but an attempt of retaining the *Mi-...lesians* money committed to his custody by their Father, for ...which himself and Family was destroyed, although he kept it ...not. Which ruine when he sought to prevent by asking pardon ...for his offence, with promise to restore the money, (as he af-...terwards did) he received this short and sharp answer from ...the Oracle, τὸ πρᾶξαι καὶ τὸ διανοῆσαι ταὐτόν ἐστι, *Intent, deed, ...all one*. To ...tempt God, and to commit the fact, is all one. To conceive a

Herodot. *lib.* 6. *cap.* 86.

1. *Obſerv.* thought of evill, is to do it, in the account of him that judge it.

It is now, I ſuppoſe, clear enough that even the ligh ſhorteſt tranſient *thoughts* of evill, naturally ariſing from heart, even where no conſent is given to, nor delight take them, are truely ſins.

But to leave theſe, and to return to thoſe *vaine tho* which have obtained entertainment and *lodging* too too lo That theſe are properly ſins, and deſerve as ſharp a cenſur outward Acts, may appear yet further from theſe follow Grounds.

Their wickedneſſe appears in 7. particulars.

1. They are the *firſt evills* committed by man.

1. Theſe are the firſt evils that ever were committed a God, whether by Angels or man. The firſt ſin of *Angel* not conſiſt in any outward bodily Act, but in the inward carriage and deviation of their *underſtandings* and *wills* (w ther the particular ſin were Pride, or Envy, or Ambition Malice, or Unfaithfulneſſe, or all;) for they are not capab externall acts of corporeall Agents, without the aſſumptio aſſiſtance of ſome kinde of bodies for the manifeſtation their preſence and operations unto us. The Apoſtle *Peter* t *they ſinned*, 2. *Pet.* 2. 4. And *Jude* tells us, *they kept not* t *firſt Eſtate*, or *Dignity**, but left their *own habitation*. This needs be the ſin of their *minds* and *wills* againſt that Law w God preſcribed to them, they having no bodily Organs to any thing againſt God, in Heaven, in an externall manne therefore is their ſin called *ſpirituall wickedneſſe in high*, or *venly places*, *Epheſ.* 6. 12. Yet even for this ſin of their *thou* what ever it were, *God caſt them down to Hell*, and *reſer them in everlaſting chaines under darkneſſe, to the Judgemen the great day*. Wherein the Apoſtles ſeem to intimate ſome traordinary Judgement whereto thoſe Angels are appoin which ſuppoſeth that their *wickedneſſe*, which was *ſpiritu* was therefore greater, becauſe *inward* and merely *ſpiritual*.

* ἀρχὴν. Jude 6.

And as for *Man*, that his firſt ſin began in the actuall a ſion of his *thoughts*, and the contemplation from off his M is not doubted by any. It is a School-concluſion * that ſi properly in the ſoul onely, as being the proper ſubject bo

* Aquin. 1. 2. q. 83. ar. 1. *in concluſ.*

and ſin, as ſuch; the body is but the inſtrument to pro- 1. *Obſerv.*
duce it into ſome outward acts. All mans actions that are vo-
luntary, have their firſt riſe from the *heart*; and *Thought* is the
firſt motion of the heart thereunto. Not that the firſt evill
thought in *Adam* aroſe from any previous corruption in his
nature, but from the voluntary choice and act of his own will
(not before corrupted, but) by that act becoming corrupt.
Howbeit afterwards, all the evill of his thoughts and actions
ſprung from the corruption of his nature, by that firſt act con-
tracted. To this purpoſe, *Aquinas* well, *primò perſona infecit*
naturam, deinde natura infecit perſonam. At firſt, the perſon
corrupted the nature; then, the nature (ſo corrupted) cor-
rupts the perſon yet further by putting him on to more actuall
ſins. So that as *evill thoughts* are now the firſt born of Origi-
nall ſin; ſo Originall ſin it ſelf began in a *Thought*, which
therefore muſt needs be a *ſin*; not of an ordinary ſize, but out
of meaſure ſinfull, that lets in ſuch a world of ſin at the
doores.

2. Theſe *Thoughts* argue an heart not yet *waſhed from* 2. They argue
wickedneſſe. Witneſſe the former part of the preſent Text col- an *unclean heart*
lated with this ſecond branch. There, he exhorts to *waſh* the
heart *from wickedneſſe*; here, he ſhews what was that *wicked-*
neſſe that he would have them to *waſh* out; namely, *thoughts of*
vanity, which while they *lodged* in their hearts, declared them
to be yet not waſhed from their filthineſſe. Not but that they
who are *waſhed* moſt throughly, are ſometimes haunted with
legions of thoſe unclean ſpirits, while they remain in this
world; witneſſe holy *Paul*, in the ſeventh to the *Romanes*. But
the difference between them & others who are altogether un-
waſhed in heart, is this, They that are waſhed, do not give thoſe
thoughts any place ſo much as for an houre, nor cordial wel-
come in their hearts at all, much leſſe do they willingly per-
mit them to *lodge* there for a night if they can avoid it, but do
their beſt to thruſt them out of doores by head and ſhoulders,
ſoona s they appear (if they be able) with hatred and dete-
ſtation of all the brood of them. *I hate vaine thoughts, but*
how do I love, ſaith one of them that was *waſhed*, yet

1. *Obſerv.* not wholly freed from *thoughts of vanity*, *Pſal.* 119. 113.

3. God calls men to repent of their *Thoughts*, (which argues them to be *ſins*;) not without a ſad intimation of the difficulty of their Pardon, *Repent of this wickedneſſe*, and *pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee*, ſaid *Peter* to *Simon Magus*, *Acts* 8. 22. *becauſe he thought that the gift of God may be purchaſed with money*. It was not ſo much his profer of *money*, as that *thought* which moved him thereunto, that *Peter* ſo much condemned in him. The baſeneſſe of his *thought* opened his purſe: ſo that, his heart was chief in this treſpaſſe. In which regard, evill *thoughts* are greater abominations in Gods eye, than outward acts abſtracted from ſuch thoughts and propenſions of the inner man to that wickedneſſe which is outwardly acted. And this makes the ſame outward act of ſin more or leſſe difficult to be pardoned unto one man, than to another, *viz.* as the *thoughts* of the heart have been more or leſſe active to affect and contrive it, and to ſhew more or leſſe inward malice or obſtinacy in the committing of it.

3. God calls men to *repent* of them.

4. *Vaine thoughts*, are the bane or prejudice of every good action, bold intruders into every place, impudent diſturbers of every duty, ſo that *we cannot do the things that we would*, through the *luſtings* of the *fleſh*, that is, the actuall motions and agitations of originall corruption ſending forth whole Armies of *vaine thoughts* againſt the Spirit, within us. They haunt and dog us to the Table, to the Bed, to the Cloſet, to the Church*, to every place; what ever we are doing, they put in, and diſtract us. *When I would do good, evill is preſent with me*, ſaith that great Apoſtle, *Rom.* 7. 21. And ſo muſt we, who may ſooner chaſe away the devill himſelf than our own thoughts, at ſuch a time. And when they are preſent, they often times over-beare us; like the Sons of *Zeruiah* they are *too hard* for *David*. If Gods Spirit ſuggeſt any thing that is good; theſe, like *Diotrephes*, *love to have the preheminence*, and will *not receive* it, nor ſuffer the ſoul that would, but caſt out what ever is good, if it be in their power. Yea, ſo do they hinder us in duty, that either they wholly keep back the heart,

4. They are the *bane* of every action.

* *Ezek.* 33. 21.

or

or carry it *far away* from the Lord, even when the body is present, and very busie at work upon some externall service, *Mat.* 15, 8. Or, if through the power of grace, the heart will not shut their call, to leave the work; then, these busie attendants dissemble their malice, and seek to mingle themselves with the motions of grace, as the *adversaries of Judah and Benjamin*, *Ezra* 4. 2. came to *Zerubbabel* and to the chief of the Fathers, saying, *let us build with you*, not with any purpose to promote, but only *to trouble the building*.

1. *Observ.*

5. As they are the first movers unto sin, so are they most indefatigable promoters of it: they are the chief brokers, and panders to all our lusts. They first find out objects and fewell for our lusts, then they not onely kindle, but encrease the flame. They give Law to *the Law of our minds*, *Rom.* 7. They command all where they get entertainment. *Thine eyes and thine heart* (saith the Lord to *Shallum*, *Jer.* 22. 17.) *are not but for thy covetousnesse*, &c. Thank *vaine thoughts* for that. These make every man as violent in his course of evill, even while he is conversant in good duties, as the horse when he *rusheth into the battell*; so that *the good which he would, he doth not, and, the evill which he would not, that he doth*; and, he *cannot cease from sin*, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14.

5. They are indefatigable solicitors for sin.

Jer. 8. 6. *Rom.* 7. 19.

6. They are the onely defilers of the inner man. Those things which *come forth from the heart, defile the man*. And what are they? *evill thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesse, blasphemies*, *Matt.* 15. 18, 19. All these are begotten there, and defile the wombe wherein they were conceived, until it be cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary. And these can defile the soul by contemplative wickednesse, as much, if not more, as when there is liberty to wallow in the mire of externall acts also.

6. They are the onely defilers of the inner man.

7. They are the first make-bates between God and man, the onely obstructions of good, and inlets of evill that we at any time suffer. *From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?* *Jam.* 4. 1. These are the first breeders of all the miseries we suffer here, or in Hell it self. Therefore the same word

7. They are the first make-bates between God and man.

here

1. *Obſerv.* here which ſignifies *vanity*, is applied alſo to ſignifie *affliction* in the very next verſe. *For a voice declareth from Dan, and publiſheth* Aven, *affliction from Mount Ephraim.* Hence the *Adagie, my affection, my affliction*; becauſe all afflictions are but the iſſues of the obliquity of our *Thoughts* and affections. *The wages of ſin is death*, Rom. 6. 23. that is, death ſpiritual, naturall, yea eternall. For, *by ſin death entred, and paſſed upon all men, for that all have ſinned*, Rom. 5. 12.

No marvaill then, if the Lord be ſo ſtrict and ſevere against thoſe *thoughts*, which have ſuch plenty and variety of *vanity* in them. Nor is this all. For,

2. Reaſon, Thoughts are ſuch as *lodge* & *ſtay* with us.

2. Theſe *Thoughts* are not gallopping Poſters that only call at the doore, and then away on the Spurre; but, they *lodge* there. That is, 1. They ſtay there for continuance; not as a travailler that tarrieth *onely for a night*; but, as an inhabitant that is alwayes reſident. Come when ye will, you may be ſure to find them. *Every imagination of the thoughts of mans heart is onely evill*, ſo is it ſuch *continually*; or, *every day*, Gen. 6. And they draw men off from the Lord; *by a perpetuall backſliding*; cauſing us to *hold faſt deceit*, and to *refuſe to return*, Jer. 8. 5. 2. They *lodge* in us, not to ſleep and to take their reſt, but as beaſts of prey, that watch to do evill; being ſo intent upon it, that *they ſleep not except they have done miſchief*: or, if perhaps they take a ſhort nap, yet even that *ſleep departeth from them, unleſſe they cauſe ſome to fall.* Evill men *imagine miſchief upon their beds.* Their *thoughts* are awake, and wandring, when their bodies ſleep: Yea, they contrive more evill in the night than any where elſe. They are like unto *Noahs* Daughters, that were never ſo buſie to make their Father drunk, to draw him to further leudneſſe, as in the night. Theſe are the *Gibeonites* that abuſe the ſtrumpet-like heart of man *all night until the morning*, and are then moſt active when others are at reſt.

Pro. 4. 16.

3. Reaſon, The Thoughts take up the *chief* and *higheſt* part of the ſoul.

3. Theſe *thoughts* are no ſkulking beggers, or inferiour hang-byes, that hover about the doores, or get into ſome out-houſes, or meaner lodgings, and revell and roar it there; but they poſſeſſe themſelves of the chiefeſt room, yea of the Throne it ſelf. They lodge in the mind and ſpirit of man, that

[illegible] of the little world, the Bed-chamber and Temple of the Lord himself. And this, they turn into an *Augaan* stable, a *Draught* house, whereinto they cast up all their vomit and filth, as Beasts in a Pound. Yea, they take up the whole soul, and defile it all: so that it is with the soul as with that *Inne*, *Luk.* 2. 7. If Christ himself demand entertainment there, he must be content with the *Stable*: *there is no room for him in the Inne*, before it be cleared and cleansed by a more than *Herculean* strength of Grace, in our Regeneration. Nay, it is well if, after we be *washed* in that *Laver*, Christ may find any place and entertainment in our souls; so *present and prevalent is* this *evill* of our Thoughts at all times *with us*. This therefore must needs be another aggravation of the *vanity* of our *thoughts*, and be a strong Ground why the Lord (who is so basely used by them) should as strictly observe, and as severely censure and condemn them, lurk they never so secretly, as he doth the outward Acts of the grossest sins. 1. *Observ.*

The first *Use* which I shall put this Point unto, is a double *Information*. *Use* 1. *Information.*

1. It discovers the folly and danger of that brutish opinion, and Atheisticall Proverb, *Thought is free*; and that when it is not lawfull to act, nor safe to speak whatsoever we would, yet, *it is lawfull to think what we list*. Nay, nothing less free, or more unlawfull, in regard of God, by whom thoughts are as easily discernable and censurable, as the grossest outward wickednesse which is most obvious to the dimmest eye. *If the word of God* be so *quick and powerfull and sharper than any two edged sword*, that it *peirceth even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart*: then it is not possible that any *creature* should not *be manifest in* the *sight* of God himself from whom that Word came, *but all things* must needs be *naked and open* to the very bottom, (*intime patentia*, as *Beza* renders the word * τετραχηλισμένα) *in his sight with whom we have*

1. That *Thoughts are not free.*

Heb. 4. 12.

* *Tradunt enim Grammatici* τραχηλίζεσθαι, *& dici quæ a collo suspensa excoriantur, & per dorsi spinam tandem resupinata finduntur, ut tota foris & intus oculis pateant. Beza in loc.* and *Henr. Steph. in Thesaur.* notes it out of *Varinus* who learnt it from a Grammarian, τραχηλίζειν *significare* διχοτομεῖν, *seu* διὰ τῆς ῥάχεως σχίζειν, *dissecare, & per spinam diffindere.*

 to do,

1. *Use of the first Observ.* *to do*, *Heb.* 4. 13. so *open* as any the most inward hidden p[illegible] of the body accurately dissected, and laid before every e[illegible] Λέξει ἐχρήσατο ἀπὸ μεταφορᾶς τῶν ἐκδερομένων προβάτων, &c. *Th[illegible] phylact* (and to the same effect *Oecumenius*) he useth a Me[illegible]phor taken from sheep whose skins are taken off, and th[illegible] hanged up by the necks with their backs toward the wall, [illegible] all their intralls laid bare and exposed to open view.

This *David* found true by experience, where he saith, [illegible] *Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me, thou knowest [illegible] down sitting and mine uprising; thou understandest my thoug[illegible] afar off. Psal.* 139. 1, 2. That is, even before those thoug[illegible] were framed in his own heart, as the Hebrew Doctors gl[illegible] it, and as sundry of our own Expositors interpret: yea, [illegible] *aeterno*, saith *Lyra*. And no marvail, seeing the Lord *posses[illegible] our reynes, Psal.* 139. 13. and professeth thus of himself, [illegible] *the Lord search the heart, I try the reynes, even to give every [illegible] according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doing[illegible] Jer.* 17. 10. *He searcheth all hearts and understandeth all the im[illegible]ginations of the thoughts*, the very figment and framing [illegible] them in the heart, 1. *Chro.* 28. 9. And God calls all the wor[illegible] to take notice of his resolution to punish the very *thoughts* [illegible] evill men; *Hear, O Earth, behold I bring evill upon th[illegible] people, even the fruit of their thoughts, Jer.* 6. 19. Thus God de[illegible] with that great Monarch the King of *Assyria*, because it w[illegible] *in his heart to destroy*; therefore, saith the Lord, *I will puni[illegible] the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria*, that is, th[illegible] proud thoughts of his haughty spirit, which are here called th[illegible] *fruit* of his heart, *Isay* 10. 12.

Ezra, Kimhi.

Such therefore as please themselves with this fancy, that they were never guilty of outward acts of uncleannesse, drunknesse, murder, fraud, oppression, &c. so long as they permit and harbour inward lustings after these or any other sins, and live but in contemplative wickednesse, they shall find, to their cost and woe, that even Christ himself, and the Gospell as well as the Law, will censure and condemn them. Let them know and consider, *that, whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart,*

Matt.

Matt. 5. 28. that, any indignity done to Christ, but in thought, shall be taken notice of and judged by him, *wherefore think ye will in your hearts?* *Matt.* 9. 4. that, ambition in the thoughts causing discontent at others, is observed by Christ, *Mat.* 20. 24. that, *Coveteousnesse* is condemned as *Idolatry*, *Col.* 3. 5. not that Coveteous men fall down upon their knees to worship their bags, but do inwardly in their thoughts idolize their riches, and place as much, yea more confidence in them, than in God: for, *the rich mans wealth is his strong City, and as an high wall in his own conceit*, or *thoughts*, *Prov.* 18. 10. that, the setting of the wits and thoughts on work, to imagine mischief in the heart, how to blast and take away the good name and honour of another that stands in our way, to contrive the ruine of those to whom we owe thanks and duty, to conceive any disloyalty so much as in thought to those in authority and Government, or malignity against any whom we envy, will be espied, discovered, and punished by the allseeing God, although those thoughts die where they first received life, and no other act follow to the prejudice of him or them, against whom such thoughts were framed. Hence, the Preacher; *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought, and curse not the rich in thy Bed-chamber; for a bird of the aire shall carry the voice, and that which hath wing shall tell the matter*, *Eccles.* 10. 20. God is the avenger of all such *thoughts*, as well as of the things themselves outwardly acted by those that contrive and harbour such *vain thoughts* within them.

1. *Use of the first Observ.*

And there is the more terror in the Judgement, because the judging of *Thoughts*, is Gods own immediate act, as being one of those Reserved Cases that none but God himself can take cognisance of. Even among men, the higher the Court, the weightier the Cause, that is tried there, and the more heavy and dreadfull the sentence. Men judge of matters of fact, that may be proved by witnesse: none but God passeth judgement on the *Thoughts*. This argues the greatnesse of the sins of the *Thoughts*. None but great matters are to be brought before *Moses*, *Exod.* 18. 22. So is it here. And suitable to the Judge is the judgement. *Can thine heart endure, or can thine hands be*

1. Uſe of the firſt Obſerv.

1. Uſe of the ſtrong in the dayes that I ſhall deal with thee, ſaith the Lord, *Ezek.* 22. 14. Therefore, look to your *Thoughts* and reckon them amongſt your greateſt ſins (if ſuffered to *lodge in you*) and ſo much the greater, by how much you ſeek to extenuate them, and to allow your ſelves in them.

2. The right methode of humiliation is to begin from within.

2. This lets us ſee the right way of performing that great Duty which we are now upon, in this Day of *Humiliation*. It is not onely to look over our externall actions, to confeſs and bewaile them, and to *return every man from the evill of his outward way*; (And yet, O that thus much might once be done, as ſometimes by the *Ninivites!*) but it is ſeriouſly to reflect alſo upon the inner man, and to ſearch for the wayes of wickedneſſe that are within, in the mind and heart; and to forſake not onely the outward acts, but all ſecret thoughts of ſin, if ever we expect pardon and peace from that God that now is in armes againſt us. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon,* or, *multiply pardon, Iſay* 55. 7.

If therefore old fornicators, old drunkards, deceivers, lyers, &c. think they have done enough when they leave off the outward acts (which perhaps they can continue no longer, for want of ſtrength, money, or opportunity,) albeit they love and hug their old villanies, taking delight in the thoughts of any of theſe, or other ſins, and in the mention of them; Let all ſuch know that however their abſtinence from outward wickedneſſe, may be divers wayes advantagious to themſelves and others in outward reſpects, (as to *Ahab*, and the *Ninivites*) yet are they ſtill as odious unto God, as when they wallowed in the mire, and *declared their ſins as Sodome* without hiding of them. And the reaſon is, becauſe the odiouſneſſe of the outward act is no more a tranſgreſſion of the Law, than the inward thoughts which do beget and produce them. Yea, the outward acts committed by the body (the drudge and ſlave to thoſe luſts which are in the ſoul,) are but *acceſſories*, in reſpect of thoſe *thoughts* within, which in every ſin are the *principals*: they are the *Abſolons* that plot and contrive

the

wickednesse; the members of the outward man are but as those 200 men that were called out of *Jerusalem* to follow *Absolom*, and went in their simplicity to act that Treason which he the Arch-traitor had contrived. *Tamar* committed great sin *in playing the harlot*, and becoming *with child by* whoredom: yet, of the two, by *Judahs* own confession, *she was more righteous than he*, because it was his part to have provided for her, and thereby to have prevented that sin which himself sollicited her unto, and committed with her. The outward man is but as *Tamar*; it is *Judah*, the heart, that is chief in the trespasse. *Those things which proceed out of the mouth* (or, which be acted by any other members of the body) *come forth from the heart, and they defile the man*, *Mat.* 15. 18. Therefore sinfull *thoughts* consented to within, are more abominable, than the outward acts, which are but the product of the inward Thoughts, and must be the matter of our greatest and deepest humiliation, if we would indeed make our peace with God, and receive benefit by this Duty.

1. *Use of the first Observ.*

2. *Sam.* 15. 11. *Gen.* 38. 24. *ver.* 26.

The second *Use* is to *reprove* and *bewaile* the hughe swarmes of *vain thoughts* that still remain in, and are entertained by not only such as are openly profane, or supinely careless of the frame of their hearts, but even by too too many of those who pretend unto Godlinesse, *being pure in their own eyes, yet are not washed from the filthinesse* that is within them. Oh the multitudes of unprofitable, idle, foolish, earthly, wanton, unclean, dissolute, profane, blasphemous, Atheisticall, prodigious thoughts that lodge, and revell it day and night, in the hearts of men! Oh the adulteries, conspiracies, murders, blasphemies, Atheismes that harbour there, finding hearty welcome & entertainment! Is it not too true that the hearts of most men, are not but for these and other the like abominations? And shall not the Lord *visite for these things, and shall not his soul be avenged on such a nation as this? Jer.* 9. 9. How justly may he go on to smite, and break us, untill he have utterly destroyed us? How well would it become every one of us to *weep and howle*, and *to make a wayling like dragons, and mourning as*

2. *Use.* *Reproof* and *lamentation* for the *vain thoughts* of men, that few take notice of.

2. *Uſe of the first Obſerv.*

* *Mic.* 1. 8.

* *Zedekiah.*

the owles, * becauſe, even for theſe things, the Lord *hath brought* this Land *ſore as in the place of dragons*: And *fire is gone out of a rod* * *of her branches, devouring her fruit, ſo that ſhe hath no ſtrong rod to be a Scepter to rule. This is a lamentation, and ſhall be for a lamentation,* Ezek. 19. 14.

3. *Uſe.* Exhortation.

The laſt *Uſe* is for Exhortation to a double Duty.

1. To deal chiefly againſt ſins of the *thoughts* in our confeſſions.

1. In all our confeſſions and humiliations to deal chiefly againſt the ſins that are within in our hearts; to diſcover, arraign and condemn our *vain thoughts*, amongſt our greateſt tranſgreſſions. Think it not enough to confeſſe outward rebellions againſt the Lord, but lay open all thoſe Traytors that *lodge* and live within; yea, as ſometimes *Benhadad* charged his Captaines in the day of battell, *fight neither with ſmall, nor great, ſave onely with the King of Iſrael*; ſo let me perſwade all, this day, to beſtow moſt pains againſt thoſe home-bred traytors within our boſomes, *which fight againſt our ſouls*, even when they draw our ſouls to take part with them againſt the Lord. Let us powre out moſt water upon that which doth moſt defile us. Let us dreg them all, this day, to Gods Tribunall, give them their full charge, and let every one be a *Samuel* to hew theſe *Agags* in peeces before the Lord, and think it not enough to deſtroy that which is *vile and refuſe*, our outward abominations: and *pray* we unto *God, if perhaps, the thoughts of our hearts may be forgiven* us.

1. *King.* 22. 31.

Act. 8. 22.

2. To labour to get rid of *vain thoughts.* *Iſay* 55. 7.

2. Labour to get your ſelves rid of all vain thoughts as much as of the vileſt actions. *Let the wicked forſake his wayes, and the unrighteous man his thoughts*, is the Councell of God himſelf, as you have heard before. You ſee he is very earneſt in it here alſo, thinking it *long* untill it be done. I will not adde any other *Motive* than what I have formerly extracted out of the Text it ſelf in ſhewing the *Grounds* of the point.

I ſhall therefore onely give you ſome ſhort *Directions* and *helps* to further and carry on this neceſſary work; and ſo paſſe to the remaining points.

5. Directions to help us in it.

1. Work the heart to a perfect deteſtation of all ſuch *Thoughts*, that we may be able to ſay with *David*, *Pſal.* 119. 113. *I hate vain thoughts.* This will ſtir up the heart to more reſo-

lution

ion and induſtry to thruſt them out of doores. We need much perſuaſion to part with whatſoevet we hate: *Amnon* was never ſo anxious to procure his faire ſiſter *Tamars* company while he ſeemed to love her, as he was violent after he *hated* her, to thruſt her away, and to *command his ſervants to put her out and to bolt the doore after her*, 2. *Sam.*13.17. could we once come up to a perfect hatred of thoſe *vain thoughts* which haunt us, the ſinfulneſſe of them would no longer be put to our account, (although we ſhould not be wholly quit of them) but, unto *ſin that dwelleth in us*. Rom. 7.17. 3. *Uſe of the firſt Obſerv.*

2. *Keep the heart above all keepings*, *Prov.* 4.23. Every man locks up his cabinet: yea, the very ſtable, and out-houſes after once he hath been robbed. If the heart be kept with diligence, *vain thoughts* cannot have thoſe opportunities and advantages to lodge, and domineir there, as where the houſe lyes open day and night for all commers. Thus if we *behave our ſelves wiſely*, we may with more confidence ſay, even of our very thoughts, as *David* of his meniall ſervants, *He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell within my houſe; he that telleth lyes ſhall not tarry in my ſight.* *Pſal.* 101.7.

3. Store the heart with the *knowledge* and *love* of God, which may take off the *thoughts* from *vanity*, and imploy them better. It is the emptineſſe of our hearts, that makes them ſo full of *vanity*; as the emptineſſe of the ſtomach makes it ſubject to be over full of wind. If therefore the heart were furniſhed with the *knowledge* of God and his Word, that would take up the heart, and continually *talk with it*, *Prov.* 6.22. and cauſe it to *hate every falſe way*, *Pſal.*119.104. And if the heart were filled with the *love* of God and his word, this would ſo fill the ſoul with meditation thereon, as would leave neither room nor leaſure for thoſe baſe companions that now take up all our thoughts and time. *O how I love thy Law!* ſaith *David*, what then? this came of it; *it is my meditation all the day long*, *Pſal.* 119.97. Thus *a good man out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good things*, *Matt.* 12.35.

4. Commit thy wayes, and heart to Gods keeping, and that

3. *Uſe of the first Obſerv.* that will ſettle and eſtabliſh thoſe *thoughts* in thee which former meanes ſhall produce. Commit *thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts ſhall be eſtabliſhed*, *Prov.* 16. 3. This will draw down a bleſſing from Heaven, to fix thoſe thoughts that otherwiſe would fleet and vaniſh.

5. In every Prayer preſented at the Throne of Grace, let our Petition be to be *cleanſed from ſecret ſins*, that is, from ſins of the *thoughts*, as well as from other ſins which we take no notice of: and, that God would fill the heart with ſuch *thoughts* as may be *accepted of him*. This was *Davids* courſe, *Pſal.* 19. *Cleanſe thou me from ſecret* faults, --- *Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy ſight, O Lord, my ſtrength and my Redeemer*. Nothing but the *ſtrength* of God who *redeemeth* us from all iniquity, can cure us of the *vanity* of the *thoughts*, and make them ſuch as may be well pleaſing to him.

So much of the firſt Point, whereon I have inſiſted the longer, becauſe it is of ſuch great and univerſall concernment, and ſo little handled, or heeded.

The next point is this:

2. *Obſerv.* *When God reſolves to ſcourge a Nation for their ſins, it is uſually very long ere they take the right courſe for their own deliverance.*

IEruſalem and *Judah* had been long and well inſtructed, often threatned, and earneſtly invited to repentance, even after judgements reſolved upon, yea executed on them for their ſins; but all in vain. Now God had determined to give them up unto an iron captivity, yet he ceaſeth not to exhort and importune them to be good to themſelves: he preſcribeth them a way how they might be ſaved out of that Calamity, and uſeth many Arguments to commend that courſe unto them. This he doth, often, and long: but they regard it not. Either they give no credit to the threatning, or think themſelves wiſe enough to direct their own way, and ſo they neglect that which he appointeth. Therefore it is that he thus expoſtulates with

with them, and upbraides them with that ſottiſhneſſe and madneſſe which did ſo long poſſeſſe them; *How long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* that is, ſuch *thoughts* as diverted them from the right way to deliverance, and ingaged them in courſes that would prolonge their miſery. 2. *Obſerv.*

This had been their manner from their youth up. They were worſe than *Joab*; he ſtood it out no longer with *Abſolom*, after his fields were ſet on fire: But theſe held off long, after all was in a flame. For when once they fell to Idolatry, the Lord often *delivered them into the hands of ſpoilers that ſpoiled them, and he ſold them into the hands of their enemies round about. Judg.* 2. 14. But they made no haſte to make their peace with God, in his way, but ran a way of their own, and ſo ſmarted long and much, ere they were delivered: ſometimes 8. *yeeres*, as under *Chuſhan-Riſhathaim*, *Judg.* 3. 8. ſometimes 18. *yeeres*, as under *Eglon*, *King of Moab*, *Judg.* 3. 14. and at another time as long, under the *Philiſtines* and *Ammonites*, *Judg.* 10. 8. And it is remarkable, that till they had been ſo long plagued, we read nothing of their *crying to the Lord*: but, ſo ſoon as they once did that, they were delivered. Not that they did not at all cry: for they often *howled upon their beds* for the miſeries that were upon them; but, they *cryed not unto him with their hearts*, *Hoſ.* 7. 14. Thus God complained of *Judah*, 3. 10. *Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but fainedly, ſaith the Lord.* So, when God joyned the enemies *of Iſrael againſt him*, *the* Syrians *before*, *and the* Philiſtines *behind*, *who devoured Iſrael with open mouth*: not for a ſhort ſpace, but for a long ſeaſon, as appears by that expreſſion, *for all this, the anger of the Lord is not turned away, but his hand is ſtretched out ſtill.* The reaſon, this; *for the people turneth not to him that ſmiteth them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of hoſts*, *Iſay* 9. 12, 13.

Now, the maine and generall Ground of all this was, their framing, entertaining, and proſecuting of many *vain thoughts that lodged in them.* We muſt therefore a little further inquire.

1. *What theſe Thoughts of this people were that did ſo much miſlead them.*

2. Obſerv. 2. *The Reaſons why ſuch vain thoughts prevailed ſo long with them.*

1. Of the *Thoughts* that retard deliverance.

1. The *Thoughts* of *Jeruſalem* which ſo much miſled them and retarded their deliverance, were either ſuch as bred them a ſtrong perſwaſion for a long time together, that Judgement threatned ſhould not come; or ſuch as, when they ſaw and found themſelves deceived in the former dreames, led them into wayes of their own deviſing, which could not prevent, but did rather haſten the Judgement, and faſten it long on them when it fell upon them.

Five ſorts of *Thoughts* hindering the prevention of the Judgement.

Of the former ſort of Imaginations that put on their hearts (and ſometimes their tongues alſo) to give the lye to God's threatnings, were (among others) theſe.

1. The impregnableneſſe of the *City*.

1. They vainly apprehended that *Jeruſalem* was impregnable, being ſo ſtrongly guarded and ſecured by the Almighty (who had made it his own Imperiall Habitation, and Court of Royall Reſidence) * that not the hardieſt Prince on Earth could ever hope to conquer it. *The Kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the World would not have believed that the Adverſary and the enemy ſhould have entred into the gates of Jeruſalem*, *Lam.* 4. 12. Hence it was, that ſo often as *Jeremy* prophecyed *of violence and ſpoile*, that is, of the taking and ſacking of the City, they laught him to ſcorne; ſo as that very *word of the Lord* denounced againſt them, *was made a reproach unto him, and a deriſion daily*, *Jer.* 20. 8.

* *Pſal.* 132. 13, 14.

2. The Priviledge of the *Temple*.

2. In theſe *vain thoughts* their corrupt hearts were the more confirmed by the ſtrong imaginations they harboured concerning the Priviledge they had by the *Temple of the Lord* in *Jeruſalem*; willingly miſtaking all the promiſes which God had made of his preſence in his Houſe and protection of his people reſorting thither: extending that unto all, which was intended onely to thoſe *that drew nigh unto him in truth*. Hence they lookt upon the Temple as a perpetuall *Aſylum*, or *Sanctuary* to them, againſt all the world, what ever wickedneſſe they ſhould commit. This appears by their ſaying, (*Jer.* 7. 4.) *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord are theſe.* Let the Prophet threaten them with the

Chal-

laid on Yoke ſo often as he pleaſed, they would as often con- 2. *Obſerv.*
ntly put off all with this one Plea, *The Temple of the Lord,*
ring this in his eares over and over againe, as an invincible
reſſe againſt all enemies and threatnings: forgetting what
d, many hundred yeeres before, had done unto *Shiloh*; that
to the place in which his own *Ark* had been ſet up by *Jo-*
ah, at the firſt ſetling of *Iſrael* in *Canaan*, *Joſh.* 18. 1. and
e continued (in the Tribe of *Ephraim*, within which,
huahs own *lot* fell) above 300 yeeres, even untill the death
Eli, at what time the *Iſraelites*, having been ſmitten in bat- Toſtatus *in*
t *Eben-Ezer*, by the *uncircumciſed Philiſtines*, out of the *Joſh.* 18.
vain thoughts, fetcht the *Ark* from *Shiloh* into the Camp,
when it came among them it might (in the next encounter)
them out of the hand of their enemies, 1. *Sam.* 4. 3, 4. But
vent declared that confidence to be *vain*: for, *Iſrael* was
thrown the ſecond time, *the Ark* it ſelf *taken*, the Prieſts
attended it were both ſlaine, *ver.* 10. 11. and the Ark
never brought back to its former place in *Shiloh* unto this
Yet theſe fond men in *Jeremiahs* dayes, would by no
nes be beaten out of that conceit, that *The Temple* would
eir *Palladium* againſt all aſſailants; *truſting in lying words*
h had been taught them by their falſe Prophets, miſinter-
ing the word of truth concerning their Priviledge by
ng the Temple of God among them, which words *could*
profit them, *Jer.* 7. 8. but became their ruine.

They had yet another *Imagination* as ſtrong and *vain* as 3. Their deſ-
former, and that was an inveterate conceit of an impoſſi- cent from
ty to be ſupplanted, and brought into bondage by any *Abraham.*
wer on earth, by reaſon of *their deſcent from Abraham*, to
om God had promiſed to be a God not onely to himſelf,
his ſeed for ever; miſapplying that unto themſelves, be-
ſe children of his *fleſh*, which God intended onely to the
ldren of his *Faith*. This *thought* aroſe in them, when
eatned from God with any Judgement. Witneſſe, that
ech of the *Baptiſt* when he had told them of the Romane
, then *laid to the root* of the whole Jewiſh State. *Think*
to ſay within your ſelves, *we have* Abraham *to our Father*,

2. Oſſora. *Matt.* 3. 9. Which ſhews plainly they were apt unto ſo
thoughts; and, that this had *been long lodged in them. Vetus ſi-*
So *Joh.* 8. 33. *bic error*, ſaith *Gualter* upon the place. This was an old erro
that had been ſo long bred in the bone (as we ſay) tha
would never out of the fleſh, untill they were miſerably ſu
dued, their Temple burnt, their City demoliſht, and their ſe
made vagabonds over all the earth, by that fatall overthro
given them by *Veſpaſian* and *Titus*, about the ſeventieth ye
of Chriſt.

4. Hearkening to *falſe Prophets.* 4. To help to root all theſe *vain thoughts* the deeper i
them, they had ſwarmes of *falſe Prophets*, which uſu
abounded moſt when the State was moſt corrupt, and ripe
* 1. *Kin.* 18. 22. 1. *Kin.* 22. 6. *Jer.* 23. 30, 31, 32. * *Amos* 5. 7. * 2. *Tim.* 4. 3, 4. ſome great Judgement *: for then, the devill is moſt buſy
vent his lying prophecies, doctrines, and dreames, when
ſtice is aſleep, * *Judgement turned into worm-wood*, and
people for their contempt and ſleighting of the truth, given
of God to * heap to themſelves after their own luſts, mu
tudes of Teachers, turning away their eares from the tru
and giving heed to fables. This was the condition of *Jeru-*
ſalem at that time. *Jer.* 5. 31. *The Prophets prophecie falſly, and*
the people love to have it ſo. They had multitudes of falſe Pro
phets that led them into that errour, and confirmed them
it, that they ſhould not be conquered by the *Chaldeans*; ſo th
let *Jeremiah* ſay what he could, they would, even to the ve
laſt, contradict him, untill *Zedekiah* and all the reſt, after
their perſecuting of *Jeremiah* for telling them the truth, by
wofull experience found the contrary, as is evident by that
and ſharp exprobration of *Jeremiah*; *where are now your Pro-*
phets which prophecie unto you, ſaying, the King of Babylon ſhall
not come againſt you, nor againſt this Land? Jer. 37. 19. Yet
this, their Prophets confidently avowed, and that *in the name*
of the Lord, pretending as ſtrong a Commiſſion from God
for ſo doing, as *Jeremy* could: and thereby prevailing ſo far
with the generall Body of that people, that onely themſelves
were reputed true Prophets of God, and *Jeremiah* rejected as
an Impoſtor, againſt whom the people (deſtinated to diſtru-
ction) took up this deſperate reſolution, *Come, let us deviſe*

counsel against Jeremiah: *for the Law shall not perish from the Priest, nor Councell from the wise, nor the word from the Prophet,* meaning thereby such *Priests*, *Councellors*, and *Prophets* as were then in most request with them.) *Come, and let us smite him with the tongue* (or, *for the tongue*, that is, for what he hath uttered against us with his tongue,) *and let us not give heed unto any of his words, Jer.* 18. 18. 2. Observ.

5. When the wiser sort (which the State-Politicians of those times took themselves to be) among them, perceived all the Prophets so constantly and unanimously to insist upon Threatnings of an iron Captivity, their Thoughts ran strongly (notwithstanding Gods command to the contrary) upon entering a league and *confederacy* with the neighbour Nation of *Egypt*, then a mighty and puissant people; that so, if afterwards *Judah* should be invaded by the *Chaldeans*, it might be aided by the strength of *Egypt*. This was in contriving many scores of yeeres before the Captivity: for the Lord discerned the project, and denounced sundry woes against it, in the dayes of *Isaiah*. The leaders of the people, even then, were walking (in their thoughts and designe) *to go down into Egypt, to strengthen themselves in the strength of* Pharaoh, *and to trust in the shadow of Egypt*, *Isai.* 30. 2. and *cap.* 31. 1. And albeit they were told sufficiently from the very first, that *the strength of* Pharaoh *should be their shame, and their trust in the shadow of Egypt, their confusion*; yet they would not be beaten out of this by all the warnings given them; but *held fast this deceit* also, even to the very last, when being besieged by the *Chaldeans*, they sent to *Pharaoh*, who furnished them with such an *Army* as caused the *Chaldeans*, upon the news of their march, to rise, and withdraw themselves from *Jerusalem* for a season, *Jer.* 27. 5. And this so strongly confirmed the *Jews* in their former *Thoughts* of the *strength of Egypt*, that till they found themselves destroyed by it, they could not be convinced of the *vanity* of it. 5. Compliance with *Idolaters*.

These were some of those *Thoughts of vanity*, which for many yeeres possessed *Jerusalem* and *Judah* when God by his Prophets, threatned their Captivity; and that caused them to turn

2. *Obſerve.* the deafe eare, yea to give the lye to all thoſe threatnings, untill it was too late to prevent that Calamity by any repentance.

Six other ſorts of *Thoughts* which prolonged their miſery when it was upon them.

Other *Thoughts* there were that likewiſe long *lodged in them*, by means whereof they were led into wayes and projects of their own deviſing, with neglect of thoſe of Gods appointment, when the Judgement was now diſcernable by themſelves to be neer at hand, or upon them; and thereby they became the principall means of prolonging their own miſery. Of which *Thoughts*, theſe were ſome.

1. Multitudes of coſtly ſacrifices.

1. They *thought* that, multitudes of externall ſacrifices would appeaſe and pacifie Gods anger, and turn away his wrath from them. All *Judah* was now ſo far awakened, as to repaire to the Temple *to worſhip the Lord*, *Jer.* 7. 2. It was the common inquiry of thoſe, and ſome forgoing times; *Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and bow my ſelf before the high God? ſhall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? will the Lord be pleaſed with thouſands of rammes, or with ten thouſands of rivers of oile? Mic.* 6. 6, 7. If this would do it, they would ply him, till they had made him weary. But all this was but a *vain Thought*. God tells them plainly, *Your burnt-offerings are not acceptable, nor your ſacrifices ſweet unto me*, *Jer.* 6. 20. Therefore do even what you will with them; *put your burnt-offerings unto your ſacrifices, and eat fleſh*, *Jer.* 7. 21. Jumble altogether; that which ſhould be burnt on the Altar, with that which ſhould be eaten by the Prieſts; and eat it up all (if ye will) your own ſelves: I will none of it. *For I ſpake not to your Fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and ſacrifices*; that is, ſuch, and ſo offered, with neglect of ſincere obedience in morall duties, *ver.* 22. Therefore, *bring no more vain oblations*, *Iſai.* 1. 13.

2. Frequent faſts.

2. They went yet further, and beſide putting themſelves to coſt, they put themſelves alſo to ſome pain, when they ſaw the former alone would not do. They *afflicted their ſouls* by *faſting*, wherein they made great ſemblance of much ſorrow and humiliation; *hanging their heads like a bull-ruſh* in the mire,

when

when overflowed by a torrent, and carried down the ſtream, *Iſai.* 58. 5. Yea, they would frequently and daily come about God in his houſe with great ſhews of much love to him and delight in his wayes, *as a nation that did righteouſneſſe and forſook not the Ordinance of their God.* They *cry unto him, my Father thou art the guid of my youth. Will he reſerve his anger for ever? will he keep it unto the end? Jer.* 3. 4. but they do but *flatter him with their lips.* For ſo God tells them, in the ſame breath; *Behold thou haſt ſpoken* (that is, thou haſt thus given me a few good words;) but in the mean while, thou *haſt done as evill things as thou couldſt, ver.* 5. This is the conſtant garb of all hypocrits, they are never more vitious than when they are moſt in externall duties of humiliation for ſin, in times of greateſt dangers and troubles. Therefore even this alſo was but the fruit of *vain thoughts* in *Judah*, which rather faſtened and increaſed, than any way removed or leſſened their miſery, becauſe *Judah turned not to the Lord with her whole heart, but faindly, ſaith the Lord, Jer.* 3. 10. 2. *Obſerv.*

3. They were not without *thoughts* of ſome *compliances* with their neighbours, in worſhip, in their guiſe, yea, in their very meretricious paintings (like *Jezabel*, when fought by *Jehu*) vainly hoping that theſe might work more compaſſion in the *Egyptians* to move them to help them; and, in the *Chaldeans* themſelves, to deal more mercifully, in caſe they ſhould ſubdue them. It was uſuall with the *Jews* to call in the *Egyptians*, if diſtreſſed by the *Aſſyrian*; and, at another time, to crave ayd of the *Aſſyrians*, if invaded from *Egypt*, or * other parts. And now, that they had reſolved upon *Egypt*, to aſſiſt them againſt the *Chaldean*, they held it a great peece of policy, yea, a point of neceſſity at that time, (whatever *Jeremiah* preſſed to the contrary) not to part with any of thoſe Idols that they had taken from *Egypt*, *Chaldea*, or other Nations; but, at leaſt during that preſent exigent, to retain them all; thinking that when ſtrangers ſhould behold the *Jews* worſhipping the ſame Gods with them, they could not be ſo hard-hearted (as otherwiſe in likely-hood they would be) towards them. That this was in their Thoughts, and pleaded 3. Compliance with their neighbours.

* 2. *King.* 16. 7.

2. *Obſerv.* as a reaſon why thy could not ſo ſuddenly lay aſide all thei
Idols, leaſt it might not onely make ſome rents among them
ſelves (many, yea, moſt of them being for liberty to enj
their Idols and to worſhip God too, and it might be dang
rous then to bind all men to worſhip one God, in one w
onely;) but alienate the hearts of their friends, and exaſpera
the ſpirits of their enemies: and that therefore it were f
better, to indulge a little; yea, in outward appearance, t
comply for a while, more than ever, that they might be m
gratious in the eyes of their friends who would more rea
aſſiſt them; and leſſe hatefull to their enemies when conqu
by them: is manifeſt by that ſharp reproof, and ſad pr
ction, *Jer.* 4. 30. *Though thou clotheſt thy ſelf with crim
though thou deckeſt thee with ornaments of gold, though thou r
teſt thy face with painting, in vain ſhalt thou make thy ſelf f
thy lovers will deſpiſe thee, they will ſeek thy life.* Thy po
ſhall be thy ruine, and that by thoſe very men whom by
means and compliances thou ſeekeſt to ingratiate to thee.
which is not to be underſtood ſo much of externall ador
of the body, as of conformity in Idolatry with the neigh
nations, thereby to ſeek and draw their love unto them,
of a pretended neceſſity; as harlots by their gariſh attire
geſtures uſe to entiſe and inveagle their luſtfull lovers. So S
Hierome, *Theodoret*, *Rabanus*, and *Lyra* among the Ancie
Calvin, *à Lapide*, and other Neotericks, expound
place.

4. False prophecies of ſhortning their troubles. 2. *Kin.* 24.

4. After the Captivity was in part begun; *Jehoiachin*,
Jeconiah, together with all the veſſels of gold that were in
Temple, the treaſure of the Kings houſe, and all the men of
lour and eſteem in *Jeruſalem*, being all carried into *Babylon*
the eighth year of *Nebuchadnezars* reign; and *Zedekiah* exal
to the Throne as a Tributary Prince, by that heathen Conq
rour: The *Jews*, beguiled by falſe Prophets then abounding
began to conceive thoughts that God had now ſet up *Ze
kiah* to aſſert and vindicate *Judahs* Liberty, and to break t
yoke of *Babylon*. This put *Zedekiah* into a new Rebell
againſt *Nebuchadnezar* (whoſe vaſſall now he was;) for H

naniah

iah had confidently avouched *in the House of the Lord*, to *Je-* 2. *Observ.*
miahs face (who had prophecyed that their captivity should
seventy yeers) *in the presence of the Priests and of all the*
ple, that lesse than two yeers would make an end of that
finesse, *the Yoke of the King of Babylon* should be broken, the
vessells of the Lords House should be all restored, and *Jeconiah*
with all the Captives, returned to *Jerusalem*, *Jer.* 28. 1, 2, 3.
These vain dreams so strongly took with the people also, that
they instantly sided with *Zedekiah*, whereby all were engaged
in tedious and fatall war, that brought them under more and
greater misery than before; and, instead of recovering those
that had been before carryed to *Babylon*, cast themselves and
many thousands more into the same condition, *Jer.* 39. In all
which time *Jeremiah* faithfully discovered the *vanity* of those
thoughts, told them the issue, convinced them of their folly; for
which he was rewarded, sometimes with contempt, some-
times with buffetting, sometimes with a prison, a dungeon, and
threatning of death it self; so desperately were they bent
to retain their own Thoughts and conceits, that they would
rather hazard, and loose all (as in the issue they did) than part
with them, before they had tried all those wayes into which,
Seducers, by their fair glozings and cunning insinuations, had
drawn them.

When they were altogether broken in peeces by the Chal- 5. Desire to take Sanctuary in *Egypt*.
dean Army, their City and Temple burnt with fire, and most
of the *Jews* gone into Captivity, together with *Zedekiah*, other
thoughts, as pernicious as any of the former, haunted them
still. For a while, they repaired to *Mizphah*, to *Gedaliah*;
who was, by *Nebuzaradan* the *Chaldean* Generall, constituted
Governour of *Judah*, under *Nebuchadnezzar*. *Gedaliah* perswa-
ded them (as *Jeremiah* had done) not *to fear*, *but to serve the*
Chaldeans; to which, for the present, they seemed not unwil-
ling, *Jer.* 40. But no sooner was *Gedaliah* butchered by *Ish-*
mael (one of the *seed Royall*,) but *Johanan* and the rest of the
people took occasion thence (out of pretence that this murder
would be so severely revenged by the King of *Babylon*, that
hardly any *Jews* in the Land, were likely to escape with their
lives) *Jer.* 41. 18.

2. *Obſerv.* lives) to ſet on foot their old Project of *going down into Egypt*, to repoſe themſelves there untill better times, where they needed not (as they fancied) to endure ſuch ſlavery and poverty as they ſaw inevitable to them at home, but ſhould have liberty, and plenty of all things; not conſidering their duty in ſubmitting to that Yoke, which God had impoſed on them in their own Land, nor the danger of being polluted with more Idolatry in *Egypt*. And becauſe *Jeremiah* was amongſt them, they importuned him to *pray to the Lord*, to ſhew them what (in that great ſtrait,) he would have them to do; and they promiſe on their parts to obey it, be it what it would: ſuppoſing that now God would ſurely give way to their going into *Egypt*, becauſe all things were then become ſo deſperate in *Judah*. Contrary to their expectation, God gives them a ſtrict charge not to go thither, but to ſtay at home; promiſing protection and bleſſing at home, and threatning utter deſtruction by ſword, famine, and peſtilence, to all that, after this warning given, ſhould dare to ſojourn in *Egypt*, *Jer.* 42. All this notwithſtanding, their vain thoughts of ſhelter in *Egypt* for a ſeaſon, and hope of return thence ſo ſoon as it might be ſafe to dwell in *Judah*, prevailed ſo far with them, as to give the Prophet the ly, *thou ſpeakeſt falſly; the Lord our God hath not ſent thee, to ſay, Go not into Egypt to ſojourn there*, *Jer.* 43. 2. and then, *Johanan* and his complices, take all the men, women, and children, that were with *Gedaliah*, and among them *Jeremiah* himſelf, and *Baruch* his Scribe (that ſo, theſe might fare as ill as the reſt, if evill befell them) and to carry them down into *Egypt*, in deſpight of *Jeremiah* and all his prophecying. Being there, at *Tahphanes* (one of the Royall Cities and Seates of *Pharaoh*) *Jeremiah* ſpares neither them, nor *Egypt*, but denounceth from the Lord, totall perdition to both, and that by the ſword of *Babylon*, *cap.* 43. and 44. Nevertheleſſe, they fell greedily to the Idolatry of *Egypt*, for which being reproved by the faithfull Prophet, they (and *Pharaoh* together, ſay ſome Hiſtorians) ſtoned him to death in *Tahphanes*. But that murder went not long unrevenged by God, who in the fourth yeare after the coming of the *Jews* into *Egypt*, brought the Chaldeans

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(after *Nebuchadnezzar* had conquered *Syria*, *Moab*, and *Ammon*) upon *Egypt*, where he over-run and ruined the Kingdom, slew the King, and many of the *Jews*; carrying the rest of them with him into *Babylon*, who might have dwelt safely in their own Land, had they not been so mad upon *Egypt*. Thus that foolish people, through their own *vain thoughts*, not onely lengthened, but much increased their misery, by not taking the course God had prescribed, but following the way of their own hearts and thoughts, in *going down into Egypt*, where the thing that they feared fell upon them, and the happinesse they expected fled further from them.

2. Observe Joseph. *Antiq. Jud. lib.* 10.

6. As for those that were in *Babylon*, one would easily believe that they had enough of the fruit of their own *vain thoughts*; so as now, if ever, they would *dislodge* and cast them. But alas! even there, *many vain thoughts* still *remained* in too many of *them*. For (to say nothing of their grosse *thoughts*, *in Babylon*, where, impatient of their bondage, they thought it better to comply with Idolaters (who flourished in all wealth and abundance, while these Captives lay under the depth of misery) than to abstain from Idolatry, and so provoke their land-masters the more against them; as appears by that in *Ezek.* 20. 32. *We will be as the heathen, as the families of the Countries, to serve wood and stone.*

6. In *Babylon*, 1. Compliance againe.

It is lamentable to consider the vanity of their Thoughts, not only in the confidence they placed in their formal *monethly fastings*, in the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth *moneth* of every yeare, *Zach.* 8. 19. for seventy yeers together, *Zach.* 7. 3. all which were rejected of God as mock-fasts, that were never truely and indeed kept unto him at all, *ver.* 5. And it is yet more wonderfull to behold the extreme vanity that possessed them, even after the end of those seventy yeers, when *Cyrus* proclaimed liberty to the *Jews* to return to their own Land, and to rebuild the City, and Temple. For even then, albeit at their first coming home, they did somewhat toward the building of the Lords House, and in the second yeare after their return, they laid the foundation of it, *Ezra* 3. Yet, upon the first opposition of their enemies, they soon laid it aside, and began

2. Frequent fasting.

3. After their return, their neglect of Gods House, and building of their own.

1. Obſerv. to attend the building of their own houſes wholly; conceiving and concluding, *The time is not come, the time that the Lords Houſe ſhould be built*, *Hag.* 1. 2. This the Lord took ſo unkindly, that when afterwards they would have gone forward with it, they meet with ſo many, and tedious oppoſitions therein (beſides many miſeries, and ſad miſcarriages and diſappointments in their own Civill affaires) that it was (by the computation of *Junius*, and other exact Chronologers) twice as long a time before they could finiſh the building of the City and Temple, as they were detained in *Babylon* in that long Captivity. And this I take to be evident to any wiſe and diligent Obſerver of the Books of *Ezra*, and *Nehemiah*, compared with other Hiſtoricall parts of the ſacred Scripture; which I ſhall now paſſe over, becauſe I have heretofore touched upon it, in your hearing. So that their own *vain Thoughts* had drawn out their miſery, into far greater length, than God himſelf at firſt intended. For even, in the twentieth year of the reigne of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, (which was at the leaſt 144 yeeres after their firſt coming home from *Babylon*) *the remnant of the Captivity in the Province were in great affliction and reproach*, *Neh.* 1. 3. which moved *Nehemiah* to ſhed many a ſalt tear, and to ſpend many *dayes and nights* in *faſting and prayer*, before the whole work could be finiſhed, and the people eaſed and freed of that long and ſharp affliction.

Vide Scaliger. Helvic. Jun. *alioſque.*

Thus I have, at length, ſhewed you, *What the Thoughts of this People were, that did ſo much miſlead them.*

2. Reaſons of the Point.

2. I come now to the Grounds of the Point, which I ſhall reduce to theſe three.

1. Sin beſots men.

1. It is the nature of ſin, and ſinfull thoughts long harboured and much made of, to beſot men in their Intellectualls, as well as to corrupt their affections. Sin makes fools of the wiſeſt men; even of *Solomon* himſelf, 1. *King.* 11. It makes men unable to judge of the folly of a ſinfull way, and the more groſſe the ſin, the leſſe knowledge is left in the ſinner, to judge of the groſſeneſſe of it. *He feedeth of Aſhes, a deceived heart hath turned him aſide, that he cannot deliver his ſoul, nor ſay, Is there not a lye in my right hand?* *Iſai.* 44. 20. And as it makes

him

him senceleſſe of the ſinfulneſſe, ſo it makes him as fooliſh in projecting his deliverance from the evill, which is drawn upon him. This was *Ephraims* caſe; *Hoſ.* 7. 9. *Strangers devoured his ſtrength, yet he knew not, yea, Grey haires were here and there upon him, and yet he knew not.* What was it that he knew not? was he ignorant of what befell him? Nay, witneſſe his fretting and chafing under it, that had brought him to grey haires before his time. But this was it which he knew not, *viz:* the true and right way to be delivered from it. He vainly ſuppoſed, he knew well enough (without asking councell of a Prieſt or Prophet) how to rid himſelf of the evils that were upon him: and ſo, out of ſelf confidence, he ſcorned to adviſe with God, even after he had found by experience, that he had taken a wrong courſe: for the Lord complaines there, in *ver.* 10. *the Pride of Iſrael teſtifieth to his face, and they do not return to the Lord their God, nor ſeek him for all this.* Let what would befall him, he would endure it all, rather than confeſſe his folly. Therefore is it added. *Ephraim alſo is a ſilly dove, without heart* (there is no fool to the ſelf, conceited wiſe man,) *they call to Egypt, they go to Aſſyria, ver.* 14. They will turn every ſtone, try all means in Earth and Hell, before they will return to God, in their greateſt extremity. No marvail then, if they find that true, *When they go I will ſpread my net upon them, I will bring them down as the foules of the Heaven, ver.* 12. Sin makes men as ſottiſh as ſilly birds in a Net: The more they flutter and beat themſelves to get out, the more ſure prey they are to the Fouler. This is it which makes great men, and wiſe men of the world to account it a diſparagement, to do as a Miniſter adviſeth, and to take any courſe rather than that: and, if they happen to take his councell, when they are beaten out of their own, they will not endure to hear that it was done at his motion or inſtance, be it never ſo neceſſary and proper for a Miniſter of Chriſt, to preſſe in behalf of his Maſter, and be they other wiſe never ſo negligent in the doing of it.

2. *Obſerv.*

2. The juſt Judgement of God upon a perſon, or people that have long ſtood it out with God, and would take no warn-

2. Reaſon, Gods Judgement upon obdurate ſinners.

2. *Obſerv.* warnings. When God by his Meſſengers hath long called and cryed earely and late unto a people, and they make no anſwer, God gives them up to *a ſpirit of ſlumber, cloſing their eyes that they ſhould not ſee, and their eares that they ſhould not hear*: And then, no marvail if they *be drunken, but not with wine, and that they ſtagger but not with ſtrong drink*, *Iſai.* 29. 9. So that, when God lets fly upon ſuch perſons and people, it is uſually very long ere they be able to ſhake the arrow out again. And that a Judgement may ly on to purpoſe, when once inflicted, untill men be either humbled or deſtroyed, God hath many wayes to bind it down, and to keep it there, by working moſt holily upon the perverſe thoughts of thoſe that are under it; as namely, 1. By letting in *an evill ſpirit*, that is, a ſpirit of jealouſy, miſunderſtanding and incurable diviſion, between Prince and people, for the juſt ſcourge and deſtruction of both; as, between *Abimeleck and the men of Shechem*, he being guilty of blood, and they being ſome way *aiding unto him* in the ſhedding of it, *Judg.* 9. 23, 24. Thus *Rehoboam*, pertinaciouſly adhering to the evill councells of a company of yong vain men *that had been brought up with him*, (1. *King.* 12.) made the rent ſo wide between him and his Petitioning Subjects, that ten Tribes fell off from him at once; which laid the foundation of ſuch a laſting warre, as never ended, while *Iſrael* and *Judah* (now divided) continued to be Kingdoms. And *this thing was from the Lord*, (1. *King.* 12. 13.) for the great ingratitude of *Solomon*, whoſe *heart turned away from the Lord God of Iſrael, which had appeared unto him twice*, 1. *King.* 11. 9. 2. God can do it by *filling all the inhabitants of the Land, even the Kings that ſit upon* Davids *Throne, and the Prieſts and the Prophets and all the inhabitants of* Jeruſalem *with drunkenneſſe, and daſhing them one againſt another, even the fathers and the ſons together*, *Jer.* 13. 13, 14. The Lord doth not onely daſh the King and people together, but even the people alſo among themſelves that ſhould hold together. It was ſo with *Egypt*, *Iſai.* 19. 2. *I will ſet the* Egyptians *againſt the* Egyptians, *and they ſhall fight every one againſt his brother, and every one againſt his neighbour, City againſt City, and King-*

dom

dom against Kingdom. 3. He can lengthen out a Judgement even upon those that may possibly agree well enough together, by smiting the wits and councells of those that are trusted to manage the Publike affaires, in times wherein there is need of most wisdom and judgement. Thus, *the Princes of* Zoan *turned fools, the councell of the wise Councellors of* Pharaoh *became brutish — they seduced* Egypt, *even they that are the stay of the Tribes.* And the reason was, *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused* Egypt *to erre in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit, Isai.* 19. 11. 13, 14. When they came together to consult the safety and peace of *Egypt*, they were led by such a spirit of perverseness, as tended rather to the further troubling and ruine of the Kingdom, being as ill able to give councell, as a pack of staggering, reeling drunkards. 2. Observe.

3. God in wisdome, doth sometimes for a good space conceal even from his own, the true Cause of a Judgement inflicted, that the Cause may be more laid to heart, when it is discovered. So that, if men were never so willing to take the right course to remove it, yet it continues, because they know not wherefore the Land mourns, and what would pacifie the Lord. *Joshuah* himself and all the Elders of *Israel* together shall not, by all their prayers and fastings, recover Gods favour to *Israel*, untill God discover the sin, and find out the *Achan* that *troubled Israel*; whereby Justice might be done on him that troubled them, *Josh.* 7. In the dayes of *David* there was a *famine* of *three yeers* continuance *yeer by yeer*, (which lasted almost half so long as the great famine of *Egypt*:) and all that *David* could do by all that time, could not remove it, untill the Lord discovered the true cause to be *for* Saul *and his bloody house, because he slew the* Gibeonites; which being made known, and Justice done upon seven of his sons, *the Lord was entreated for the Land*, 2. *Sam.* 21. *Who* therefore, *is the wise man, that may understand this, and who is he to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the Land perisheth, and is burnt up like a wilderness that none passeth* 3. Reason, God doth sometimes conceal from his own, the true cause of the Judgement.

2. *Obſerv.* *paſſeth through?* Jer. 9. 12. Till this be underſtood, the judgement is immovable.

You have now the *Reaſons* of the Point. I ſhall (for more expedition) deferre the *Uſes*, untill I have briefly ſpoken ſomewhat of the third Point, which is this.

3. *Obſerv.* *God keeps exact reckoning of the time, and accounts it very long, and takes all delaies ill, wherein men, under judgements, are projecting waies of their own for their deliverance, and ſo withſtand thoſe of his appointment.*

THis the Lord here mainly aimed at in this *Exprobration*, namely, to let them know that he took ſpeciall notice of, and laid to heart every houre and minute, wherein thoſe *vain thoughts remained in them*, and accounted the time very *long*. *How long! how long ſhall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* ſpeaking by way of a patheticall *Interjection*, uttering a deep paſſion of the mind (after the manner of men) by an imperfect ſpeech; and not of a bare *interrogation* onely, whereby a queſtion may be put, and the heart little or nothing affected with it.

Thus God takes notice of the ſame thing, not onely in *Pharaoh*, *How long wilt thou refuſe to humble thy ſelf before me?* *Exod.* 10. 3. but, even in *Iſrael* alſo. *How long refuſe ye to keep my Commandments and my Laws!* *Exod.* 16. 28. *How long will this people provoke me, and how long will it be ere they believe me!* *Num.* 14. 11. *O ye ſons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into ſhame! how long will ye love vanitie and ſeek after leaſing!* and this, marked with a *Selah*, *Pſal.* 4. 2. So Wiſdom cryes out to the wicked, (who are the greateſt fools, be they never ſo wiſe in matters of the world,) *How long, ye ſimple ones, will ye love ſimplicity, and the ſcorners delight in their ſcorning, and fools hate knowledge!* *Prov.* 1. 22. In like manner God ſpeaks to the ſpirituall *ſluggard*, that trifles away precious opportunities, untill he put himſelf into the forelorn condition of the *fooliſh Virgins*, *Matt.* 25. thinking, now and

now,

now, he will ſhake off his ſloth, and careleſſeneſſe of his ſoul, and do ſomewhat toward the *working out of his ſalvation*, yet ſtill defers, and lyes ſtill in the bed of ſecurity; *How long wilt thou ſleep, O ſluggard! when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep! Prov.6.9.* 3. *Obſerv.*

And as God *takes notice of* our ſtupidity; ſo, he *takes it very ill*, and layes it deeply to heart, where ever he finds ſuch procraſtinating, and trifling with him. *I* (ſaith the Lord) *have ſeen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdneſſe of thy whoredoms; and thine abominations on the hills in the fields: woe unto thee, O* Jeruſalem! *wilt thou not be made clean? when ſhall it once be! Jer.*13.27. He not onely ſees what ſhe doth, & how long ſhe lyes wallowing in her filthineſſe; but denounceth *woe* unto her for the ſame. This is it which makes *his anger* (even after ſharp and devouring afflictions) *not to be turned away, but his hand to be ſtretched out ſtill*; when, *the people turn not to him that ſmiteth them nor ſeek the Lord of hoſts*, as they ought, *Iſa.*9.12, 13. If God *give* Jezabel *ſpace to repent of her fornications, and ſhe repent not*: the next news ſhe heares from him ſhall be this, *Behold, I will caſt her upon a Bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds, Rev.*2.22. I ſhall adde but one inſtance more, and that is of *Iſrael*. Read over the fourth chapter of *Amos*, which is enough (if any thing be enough) to awaken *England*. God ſeeing *Iſrael* in a fatall Lethargy, uſed all means to awaken her; and, finding her too tenacious of her wickedneſſe, applied all means to imbitter it to her; but, keeps an exact account of all, of the *famines, drowths, blaſtings, mildews, palmer-wormes, peſtilences after the manner of* Egypt, *ſword, fire and other judgements*, and of her obſtinacy in them; that, *yet*, and *yet*, and *yet* ſhe ſtood it out, and would *not return unto him*: And with all, bids her *now prepare her ſelf*, as the Sheriff uſes to give warning to malefactors that are ſuddenly to be executed: for ſhe ſhall know, to her woe, that the Lord keeps reckoning of every prank, and delay, of every day and houre of her ſtanding off; for he had *ſworn by his holineſſe that the dayes ſhould come upon her, wherein he would take her away with hooks,*

3. *Obſerv.* *and her poſterity with fiſh-hooks, ver.* 2. He would leave neither her, nor any of hers in the Land; but, the *Aſſyrian* ſhould ſweep them all away, without diſtinction, or mercy. And to ſhew how reſolute he was in this, he after binds himſelf to the ſame ſeverity by another Oath, *Amos* 8. 7. wherein he *ſwears by the Excellency of* Jacob, *ſaying, Surely I will never forget any of their works.*

The Grounds of this Point are likewiſe three.

1. Reaſon, from Gods *Compaſſion.*

1. The Bowels that are in God do ſo much yern upon his people in diſtreſſe, that as *in all their afflictions, he himſelf is afflicted, Iſai.* 63. 9. So is he infinitely deſirous to haſten their deliverance, and therefore extremly ſenſible and even impatient of the leaſt delay or obſtruction (be it but a *vain thought*) retarding their deliverance. *Although he cauſe grief, yet will he have compaſſion according to the multitude of his mercies: for he doth not willingly afflict, nor grieve the children of men,* Lam. 3. 33, 34. No marvail then if he cry out, O Hieruſalem, Hieruſalem, *which killeſt the Prophets, and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee; How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold your houſe is left unto you deſolate,* Matt. 23. 37, 38. Yea, ſo paſſionately earneſt is God to deliver his people, that their ſtupidity, and obſtinacy in *withſtanding their own deliverance,* drew teares from our Saviour; for, *when he came neer (to Hieruſalem) he beheld the City, and wept over it, ſaying, O if thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes,* Luk. 23. 41, 42. The notice he takes of their long ſtanding out, and his laying it ſo much to heart, was upon this ground; his *earneſt deſire to ſave them.* How will he takes this, he that runs may read, in the next words; *For the dayes ſhall come upon thee, that thine enemies ſhall caſt a trench about thee, and compaſſe thee round, and keep thee in on every ſide, And ſhall lay thee even with the ground and thy children within thee; and they ſhall not leave in thee one ſtone upon another;* and the reaſon thereof was this, *becauſe they knew not the day of their viſitation, ver.* 43, 44.

2. By

2. By mens *delayes*, and *projecting wayes of their own for deliverance, with neglect of those of Gods own appointment*, the Majesty, Power, and Justice of God, as well as his Mercy, are all sleighted at once. They that having *favour shewed* them, *will not learn righteousnesse*, are charged with this, *they will not behold the Majesty of the Lord*, *Isai.* 26. 10. Elsewhere, with not regarding his *Power*, *Heare now this, O foolish people and without understanding, which have eyes and see not, which have eares and hear not, Fear ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence, which have placed the Land for the bonds of the Sea by a perpetuall decree? &c. but this people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart, they are revolted and gone*, *Jer.* 5. 21, 22, 23. In another place, they are taxed with contempt of his *Justice*; *Shall a Trumpet be blown in the City, and the people not be afraid?* *Amos* 3. 6. Now then, when men thus stand it out, and thereby sinne against so many Attributes of God at once, is it any wonder that he takes these delayes so ill at our hands?

3. *Observ.* 2. Reason, such sin against all the *Attributes* of God at once.

3. Common Equity cryes shame, and calls for revenge upon this sin. We would not be so used our selves, by those under our own command and Government. If a Prince send a gracious Message to one of his Vassals, justly condemned to die, and let him know, that if he will but acknowledge his offence, be heartily sorry for it, and resolve to do so no more, he will send him a Pardon; would he bear such an answer as this: *Sir, I accept of your Pardon, thank you for your favour, and hope you will spare me; but I have another way to work my own deliverance; and that is, by continuing to be a Traitor still, at least in heart, if not with my hands?* What greater scorne could be returned? If a father threaten his child, or a Master his servant, would it not inrage him to find either child or servant, instead of reforming that fault, to study, and prosecute other wayes of stubbornes and disobedience, the better to uphold himself in his first offence? Doth not God himself thus plead it out with *Moses*, soliciting the restitution of his sister *Miriam*, or *Mary*, before she had been sufficiently humbled by bearing the just shame of her sin, and the markes of Gods displeasure for it,

3. Reason, we would not be so used our selves.

3. *Obſerv.* for the whole time apponted? *If her father had but ſpit in her face, ſhould ſhe not be aſhamed ſeven dayes?* *Num.* 12. 14. Much more therefore ought ſhe to undergo that ſhame which God himſelf had caſt upon her, and wait upon him in his own way for her reſtitution. Nay, we are apt to quarrell and clamour without cauſe, even againſt God himſelf, when we do but conceit that he neglects or delayes to take notice and accept of any thing we tender to him in our way, (how juſtly ſoever he may abhor it;) *wherefore have we faſted, ſay they* (in *Iſai.* 58. 3.) *and thou ſeeſt not? wherefore have we afflicted our ſouls, and thou takeſt no knowledge?* No marvail then, if God take it ill with a witneſſe at the hands of men, when they give him juſt cauſe to complaine that, when he hath long and earneſtly preſcribed them a way to their own deliverance, by *waſhing their hearts from wickedneſſe*, and by parting with all thoſe *vaine thoughts* which made their hearts ſo wicked, they ſtill ſuffer thoſe very *thoughts* ſo *long* to *lodge* and *remain within them*, and expecting deliverance by that way which was the cauſe of their evils.

The Uſes of the two laſt *Points.* I am ſenſible of your affaires, and of the length of this Diſcourſe, I ſhall therefore now abſolve the *Uſes* of both theſe Points together, with all poſſible brevity.

If it be *uſually ſo long ere men, under Judgement,* (eſpecially Nationall) *can hit upon the right courſe for their own deliverance*; and that God *keeps ſuch an exact reckoning of the time, accounting it very long, and taking all delayes ſo ill at their hands, wherein they proſecute wayes of their own, with neglect of thoſe of his appointment, for their deliverance*: Then,

1. *Uſe.* Information. 1. Be hence *informed* of the great *deceitfulneſſe of ſin*, and of the miſchief it brings to all that entertain it; And that the Scripture ſaith not in vain, *Exhort one another daily, while it is called to day, leſt any of you be hardened through the deceitfulneſſe of ſin*, *Heb.* 3. 13. Sin hath a beautifull face, but a Crocodiles heart, and a Scorpions taile. It firſt wooes hard to get any acceptance at preſent; afterwards, it effaſcinates the heart to give it *lodging* & longer entertainment; and then, when Judgments purſue them, men find their ſins to deal with them as *wine*

(which

(which is *a mocker*, *Pro.* 20. 1.) uſeth to handle thoſe that immoderately uſe it; it cauſeth them to miſtake all things, & to be moſt to ſeek of their way when it is moſt dangerous to deviate from it: ſo as it may be ſaid of all ſinners, in this caſe, by reaſon of ſin (when they have moſt need to have all their wits about them, when the wrath of God begins to burn like fire, whereby even the whole *Land becomes as a wildernesse that none passeth through*, and, *there is none amongst us that knows how long*;) that was once laid to the charge *of the drunkards of* Ephraim, by reaſon of wine; *they have erred through wine, and through ſtrong drink are out of the* way, *and the Prophets have erred through ſtrong drink, they are ſwallowed up of wine: they are out of the way through ſtrong drink, they erre in viſion, they ſtumble in judgement*, *Iſai.* 28. 7. So is it with every one that is greedy of ſin, it takes away the very underſtanding, reaſon and life of all that *lodge* it and feed it. Yea, it deals with them, as ſometimes *Eliſha* with thoſe that were ſent from the *King of* Syria, to apprehend him; the Prophet firſt procures them to be *ſmitten with blindneſſe*; then, by an *Irony*, (finding them at a loſſe) cryes out unto them, *This is not the way, neither is this the City: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye ſeek*; *but he led them to* Samaria, even into the midſt of their enemies, 2. *King.* 6. No ſtratagem, or ambuſh in the world, can be more cunningly contrived, nor more ſurely take, than that which is laid for the precious ſoul of every ſinner, by his *vain thoughts* that *lodge within him*.

1. *Uſe.*

2. This (like *Ezekiels roule* that was *written within and without*) ſpeaks nothing but *Lamentation and woe*, (*Ezek.* 2. 10) to all thoſe ſottiſh ſinners, who being reproved for any ſin, and exhorted forthwith to forſake it, as the onely ſure means to get rid of the evils it hath brought upon them, do yet *hold faſt deceit and refuſe to return*; and that upon an opinion that they can repent when they pleaſe, and make their peace with God when they liſt: That it is no great harme to hold on their ſins a little longer; and ſo upon this preſumption, they *weary themſelves to commit iniquity*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh, *Jer.* 9. 5. They have wiſdom, policy, ſubtilty, ſtrength, friends,

2. *Uſe.*
Woe and *terrour* to obdurate ſinners.

2. Uſe. friends, and allies, a purſe &c. to make their peace with men, to ſhake out any arrow that ſticks in their fleſh, to free themſelves of any troubles that have arreſted them: and ſo, they miſerably periſh by means of thoſe *vain thoughts* that thus miſlead and abuſe them, by ſetting up an *Ignis fatuus* to beguile them; inſtead of a true light to guid their feet into the way of peace. Thus are we all deluded and cheated by every baſe luſt, by every *vain thought* of pride, coveteouſneſſe, ambition, wantonneſſe, idleneſſe, Machiavellianiſme, revenge, ſelf-ſeeking, private ends in managing publike affaires, undermining, blaſting, or depraving others to make way for our own projects, &c. that *lodgeth* in us. What ever our luſt be, if we *yeild* untoit (as that tame ſot to the flattering harlot, Prov. 7.) woe unto us, we are undone, we have no longer any command of our ſpirit, but we *willingly go after it ſtraightway, as an oxe goeth to the ſlaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the ſtocks, till a dart ſtrike through our Liuer, as a bird haſteth to the ſnare, and knoweth not that it is for his life.* This is that *Delilah* that never admits *Sampſon* to ſleep in her lap, but with purpoſe to betray him to the *Philiſtines* that have vow'd his deſtruction: *She hath caſt down many wounded, yea many ſtrong men have been ſlaine by her: Her houſe is the way to Hell, going down to the Chambers of death.* They who cannot withſtand temptation ſolliciting to ſin, will hardly find their way out of ſin, or ſo much as an heart truely deſirous of freedom from it, when moſt plagued for it, but chooſe rather to go to Hell with their luſt, than to Heaven without it.

Prov. 7. 26, 27.

3. Uſe. Inſtruction, Touching the prolonging of our miſeries.

3. By this, we may be able to prognoſticate and foretell ſomewhat of the length of the great evils that now lie ſo heavy upon this languiſhing Kingdom, in this day, or rather long night of our ſorrow, wherein *we wait for light, but behold obſcurity, for brightneſſe, but we walk in darkneſſe; we grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we ſtumble at noon-day as in the night, we are in deſolate places as dead men: We roare all like beares, and mourn ſore like doves; we look for judgement, but there is none; for ſalvation, but it is far off from us.* Hitherto Gods hand hath been heavy, and is yet ſtret-

branched out ſtill. Thank none but our *vain thoughts* within us, for all this. Could we have diſlodged them, our work, our toile, our trouble and dangers had been long ſince at an end. *When a mans wayes pleaſe God, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him, Prov.* 16. 7. Yea, he ſhall be *in league with the ſtones*, and *at peace with the very beaſts of the field, Job* 5. 23. But, O the multitude, variety, continuity, and fatall conſtancy of *vain Thoughts* that ſtill remain in the moſt, yea, in the beſt!

3. *Uſe.*

When this unhappy and unnaturall war firſt began, how were we filled with ſtrong expectations that one moneth or ſix weeks would have made an end of the buſineſſe! When thoſe hopes were fruſtrate, what mountaines of freſh confidence did our *thoughts* caſt up in us, by the next Summers expedition, eſpecially by that famous relieving of *Glouceſter*, and firſt battell at *Newbery*, wherein divers chief Commanders of the Enemy were ſlaine, and ſcarce any of them left unwounded. *Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with ſinging.* Howbeit, that *Summer is ended*, and another gone over us, and we are entring upon a third, *yet we are not ſaved.* Then, our thoughts (as *vain* as any of the former) began to run ſtrongly upon the faults of men truſted with your ſword, the negligence of ſome, the weakneſſe and cowardiſe of others, but eſpecially the Treachery of others: and what next? do but purge the Armies, ſettle their pay, remove the unworthy, mould a Godly Army, change the Commanders, and then, *Quid non ſperemus hiantes?* Far be it from me to ſlight any of theſe means, or your honourable care and indefatigable diligence therein, ſo often as juſt cauſe requireth. But give me leave to deal faithfully and plainly; none of all theſe will do any thing, but rather help to increaſe and lengthen out our miſery, ſo long as our *vain thoughts remain with us*; if we truſt in an arme of fleſh, and vainly think that ſhall ſave us, the *Lord will reject all our confidences, we ſhall not proſper in them: Jer.* 2. 37. If, in the wiſdom, fidelity, and power of a Parliament, even that alſo ſhall deceive us; not becauſe it is unuſefull, for it is Gods Ordinance (without which, we had long ere this been *in the whales-belly* of boundleſſe Prerogative, and *gone down*

Jer. 8. 20.

Jon. 2.

3. Uſe. *down to the bottomes of the mountaines* of Arbitrary Tyranny, *with her barres about us for ever;*) but if once we make an Idoll of Parliaments, or of any creature, and begin to think thoughts of them which we ought not to conceive of any but of God himſelf, the Lord will not endure it. How quickly can he ſay to all, whether Parliament men themſelves, or others that truſt in them beyond what is meet, as ſometimes the King of *Aſſyria* to *Hezekiah* and his people, for their truſt in the ſtrength of *Egypt*, 2. *King.* 18. 19, 20. *What confidence is this wherein thou truſteſt? thou ſayeſt* (*but they are but vain words*) *I have councell and ſtrength for the war!* Alas! how ſoon can the Lord (yea, how often doth he) blaſt all the wiſdom and councell of the beſt Councellors! *Achitophels councell* was once accounted of *as if one had enquired at the Oracle of God*, 2. *Sam.* 16. 23. And when he gave his advice to *Abſolom*, it had taken with a witneſſe, and done the deed projected, had not *Huſhai* prevented it by giving contrary councell; and that becauſe *the Lord had appointed to defeat the good councell* (not that it was good ſimply, but onely in reference to the end for which it was given,) *of* Achitophell, *to the intent that the Lord might bring evill upon* Abſolom. Which I note by the way to ſhew that *good councels* are ſometimes diſappointed by the good God, to open a way to the deſtruction of an evill people, as I have obſerved before, in the caſe of *Egypt*, *Iſai.* 19. 13, 14.

Would we then know, when we are likely to ſee an end of our troubles? The Reſolution will be eaſy and ſure: Then, and never till then, ſhall ſalvation and deliverance *come leaping upon the mountains, and ſkipping over the hills*; *Cant.* 2. 8. yea, then ſhall the Lord himſelf *ride upon a Cherub and fly, even upon the wings of the wind*, *Pſal.* 18. 10. to give us reſt, and to *keep us in perfect peace, making our Officers peace, and our Exactors righteouſneſſe*, ſo that *violence ſhall no more be heard in our Land, nor waſting or deſtruction within our borders, but we ſhall call our walls ſalvation, and our gates praiſe*; namely, when we are willing to part with all our *vain thoughts* formerly mentioned, or any other *that lodge within us*, and *ſhall caſt them away as a monſtruous cloth, ſaying unto* them with hatred and deteſta-

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tion, *Get ye hence, Iſai.* 30. 22. But untill then, it is not all the wiſdom, policy, and Armies in the world, that ſhall be able to help us; it will be with us as with *Iſrael*, 2. *Chro.* 15. 5, 6. when *there was no peace to him that went out, nor to him that came in, but great vexations were upon all the inhabitants of the Countries, And nation was deſtroyed of nation, and City of City: for God did vex them with all adverſity.* 3. *Uſe.*

4. Be hence Admoniſhed and Exhorted to beware of all thoughts, deſignes, and projects of your own, as thinking thereby to put an end to the miſeries and deſolations of the Kingdom. Make haſte, part with all ſuch *vanities*, even *while it is called to day, leaſt any of you be hardened* in them, ere you be aware. Caſt *Iezabel* out at the window preſently, paint ſhe never ſo exquiſitely, although formerly thou have been her Eunuch: now (*Jehu*, ſhall I ſay? nay,) now *Jehovah* calls, and demands her of thee. Let this very houre begin the eternall parting between us and all our luſts, and *thoughts of vanity*. Let not God come ſo much as once more, and find them *lodging in us*, and renew his complaint againſt us, and ſay, *How long!* Leſt he make us to howl out our complaints to him for the length of our calamities; to follow him in vain, with as many *How long's*, as he hath done us, and to cry out with the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 12. 1, 2. *How long wilt thou forget me (O Lord) for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long ſhall I take counſell in my ſoul, having ſorrow in my heart daily? How long ſhall mine enemy be exalted over me?* And when we have all done, to ſit down in deſperate grief, as ſometimes the Church of old, having *none among us that knoweth how long. Pſal.* 74. 9. 4. *Uſe.* *Admonition* to part with *vain thoughts* ſpeedily.

It would be a ſad Symptome of a laſting Judgement and univerſall devaſtation, if after all the Lords *waiting that he might be gracious unto us*, * we ſhould yet longer *deſpiſe the riches of his goodneſſe, forbearance, and long-ſuffering, as men not knowing that the goodneſſe of God leadeth unto Repentance.* This *were to treaſure up* more *wrath againſt the day of wrath*, *Rom.* 2. But eſpecially if You, Honourable and Beloved, (who *are the ſtay of the Tribes* *) after ſo many dayes * *Iſai.* 30. 18. * *Iſai.* 19.

4. Uſe. of Humiliation, and ſo often ſolemn falling down before the Lord, (as ſometimes *Joſhuah and the Elders*) *with duſt upon your heads*, in the behalf of *Iſrael*, ſhould entertain and harbour any *Thought* of your own ſelf ſufficiency, wiſdom, power, any thing, to carry on the great work of ſo many Kingdoms (all gaſping for life) further than God ſhall pleaſe to uſe you as his humble and faithfull Inſtruments, that are well content to be made any thing, every thing, nothing, ſo he may have glory, what ever becomes of you, and of all your private intereſts. Take heed, take heed, I humbly pray you, to your own Spirits; you have your corruptions, your *vain Thoughts* as well as others, and are obnoxious to more and greater tentations, as the higher Trees and Towers are more ſubject to winds and ſtorms, than lower ſhrubs and buildings. *Vain thoughts* in private perſons, do for the moſt part ſink few but themſelves unleſſe, when the diſeaſe becomes Epidemicall: But *vain thoughts* entertained by you, in managing the great buſineſſes that are under your hands, would ruin two, if not three Kingdoms at once. Let the miſcarriage of *Jeruſalem* make you more circumſpect and cautious. Their *vain Thoughts* are recorded for your Admonition. Look upon them as ſo many Rocks or Shelves that ſplit them, and will as certainly ruin all others that (not taking warning by *Jeruſalem*) ſhall adventure too neer them.

Your *Priviledges* be great; and, againſt men that would ſpoile you of them, it is juſt and honourable to plead and aſſert them. But take heed you uſe them not as any *Plea in barr* againſt God. He is content that you enjoy yours; let none prevaile with you to purloine from him any thing that is his. Stand not upon termes with *Jeſus Chriſt*, as if any Preſcriptions or Laws of the Kingdom (although never ſo fundamentall) were ſufficient Ground not to receive and obey the Laws of his Kingdom, which ſeem diſſonant and different from yours. This is the high way to looſe all, and *Chriſt* too. There is a time coming, and it is at hand, wherein all the Kingdoms of the Earth ſhall be the Lords; not by tempering his Laws to theirs, but by conforming theirs to his; not by blot-

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ting out the words of Scripture, but by *breaking them to peeces* that oppoſe it. Now therefore, if *Kings* will not be *wiſe*; yet *be inſtructed ye Judges of the Earth*: You, I mean, that be the *Governours of* our *Iſrael*. Away with all *vain Thoughts* of the Vulgar. Do not think that your correſpondence with that great City, your care for the externall parts of Religion, your deſcent, your wiſdom, your faſting, your utmoſt abilities and endeavours will or can do any thing, when reſted upon, to ſtanch the iſſue of blood in this or the neighbouring Kingdoms. Take heed of thoſe ſpirits of errour, who *with faire, (ſpecious, pargetted, glozing words)* ſeek to *make merchandize of you, beguiling unſtable ſouls*. Beware of thoſe compliances with and indulgences to all ſorts of Sects and Schiſmes now pleaded for both by word and writting, as if it were a part of *Chriſts* Legacy and his peoples Liberty to be of what Religion they will; to be tolerated in any opinions never ſo erroneous and pernicious (untill further light:) that it is the Magiſtrates duty to protect them in that Liberty; and that the contrary thereunto is to perſecute *Chriſt*. Hath God inſerted this as one maine branch of his Grand Covenant with his people under the Goſpell, *I will give them one heart and one way that they may fear me for ever*, * that is, *that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to ſerve him with one conſent? Zeph.* 3. 9. Did *Chriſt* aſcend up on high and *give guifts unto men, and gave ſome, Apoſtles; ſome, Prophets; and ſome, Evangeliſts; and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtery, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt, till we all come, εἰς τὴν ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως into the Unity of the faith*; and, is it *perſecution*, and *Anti-chriſtianiſme* to engage all to *Unity* and *Uniformity*? Doth *Paul* bid the *Philippians* to *beware of the Conciſion*? *Phil.* 3. 2. Doth he *beſeech* the *Romanes* to *mark thoſe which cauſe diviſions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which they had learned, and to avoid them*; and that upon this ground, *that they who are ſuch, ſerve not the Lord* Jeſus *but their own bellies*, however *by good words and faire ſpeeches they deceive the hearts of the ſimple? Rom.* 16. 17, 18. Doth he, writting to the *Galatians*, with, *I would they were even cut off*

4. *Uſe.*

2. *Pet.* 2. 3. *ver.* 14. πλαστοῖς λόγοις.

* *Jer.* 32. 39.

4. Uſe. *that trouble you*, Gal. 5. 12. And is it ſuch an hainous offence now, for the faithfull Servants of *Chriſt*, to *Adviſe* you to the ſame courſe? O Heavens! be aſtoniſhed at this; and bluſh for the ignorance of ſome, and impudence of others, that dare ſo boldly preſſe for ſuch a Toleration, which none but *vaſt* deſtructive *Thoughts* of carnall men can look upon, without indignation and horror. Beware how you hearken to thoſe Empiricks and Syrens, who ſeek to charme the world into a deep ſleep, by preſenting their confidence of a neceſſity of complying with all ſorts of Sectaries, yea, of truſting the ſword in their hands, and to defer the ſettling of matters of Religion during the war, for fear of looſing the Godly party (as too many proudly ſtile themſelves, by way of difference from all that are not of their opinions and wayes:) What is this, but to teach God a new forme of Politicks, to proclaime, that it is not alwayes ſafe to hold out the truth of the Goſpel, and to command all men to imbrace it, but much ſafer to halt between two opinions? Belike *Joſiah* went beyond his bounds, when after himſelf had ſworn a ſolemn Covenant to the Lord, *he made all* Judah *and* Benjamin *to ſtand to it*, and *made all that were preſent in* Iſrael, *to ſerve the Lord their God*, 2. Chro. 34. 32, 33. And *Aſa*, much more, when he drew all the people into a Covenant, *That whoſoever would not ſeek the Lord God of* Iſrael, *ſhould be put to death, whether ſmall or great, man or woman*, 2. Chro. 15. 13. But the ample and tranſcendent commendations which the Lord gives unto theſe pious Kings, eſpecially in reference to their ſincerity and zeale in reforming and ſettling of Religion in one uniforme way, may ſufficiently warrant and encourage all Religious Magiſtrats, to take care that all under their Government, ſhould all ſerve the Lord *With one ſhoulder*; this being not a tyranny over men, but the Priviledge of the Goſpell. Beware yet, at laſt, of that *thought*, that *it is not yet time to build the Lords Houſe*. *Judah* paid dear for this, as I have heretofore ſhewed you at large, on *Pſal.* 76. 10. and in my former *Serm.* on this Text; and therefore ſhall ſpare my ſelf and you the paines of inlarging at the preſent. Settle this in your hearts, Gods Truth, the true Worſhip and

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Discipline of *Christ*, set up and established in one uniforme way, never prejudiced any nation or State (where it had free passage) in the least degree, but hath ever been their safety, happinesse, and honour. It is errour, (how much soever cryed up,) not Truth (how much soever cryed down and blasphemed) that makes and foments rents and factions. It is he that is not with *Christ*, that scattered *abroad**. Truth hath a commanding power over the hearts of men: it guides their feet into wayes of peace; it heales breaches, brings in the *hearts of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, and makes ready a people prepared for the Lord.* It will cause all errour to fall before it, as *Dagon* before the *Ark*, and to vanish, as dimme candle light before the Sun in his strength. Wherefore, *Get ye up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord, Hag.* 1. 8. Set up *Christs* Kingdom, hasten the settling of a Godly Discipline, and then take this for your reward, *I am with you, saith the Lord**: and, *from this day will I blesse you.*

4. *Use.*

* *Matt.* 12.30.

Luk. 1. 17.

* *Hag.* 1. 13. *cap.* 2. 19.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

Pag. 2. lin. 34. read *lun.* and in marge לון for ליל. pag. 6. lin. 3. for *animi* read *cordis*, and dele *cogitatio.* Ibid. lin. 35. read *nat'.* pag. 36. lin. 17. for *intended*, read *threatned.*